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—) LIFE OF (—

CHARLES B. W. GORDON,

PASTOR OF THE

 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 

PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA,

— AND —

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

BY REV. WILLIAM HENRY SHERWOOD, A. B.,

*Author of "Talent of the Negro Race," "Poetic Gleanings," "Founder
of People's Voice," etc.*

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PREFACE.

WHOEVER writes about human life, and especially the life of a chosen vessel of the Almighty Jehovah, should feel the magnitude of his responsibility. The greatness, the mystery of his being, the wonderfulness of his personage, the overwhelming matchlessness of his existence, in the future, all rise like a mountain before the writer. Therefore, he who writes of men of God must do it in remembrance of the image of the Divinity, in which their souls are made—a profound thoughtfulness, a reverent and tender contemplation of an immortal, responsible, self-acting being. To write well of a man's life has been held as a great art, because it is reproducing whatever one believes has transpired under the observation of the writer, and is therefore taken for a true narrative. To write what a great mind imagines, to write really what goes on in any human soul, is to do a far greater thing than any pen has yet accomplished; yet, some incidents of the life of a truly great man can be written and presented for examples for others who follow in their tracks. If the politician can find time and talent to devote to the life and career of statesmen, and the theatre-goers genius to spend on the vicious tragedian, the Christian might afford to consecrate a few short lines to the acknowledgment of incidents and examples of one of their most devout leaders.

Unfortunately for us, too little value is placed upon the examples of our ministers and the records of our churches. Every other organization of mankind makes records and writes histories of their leaders and those who are led. Why should not the glorious old mother of Virginia African Baptist Churches transmit to her children her most heavenly record, subjoined with the life of her beloved pastor?

The events recorded in this volume are such as has transpired under the observation of the writer to a very great extent, and are put in print by him as examples worthy to be imitated by the many youths upon whose shoulders the mighty responsibility of our religious and literary institution must shortly rest, as well as to offer to each family of his membership a volume combining the life and sentiments of their pastor with the history of their church. The pride which each member has in both his church and pastor, is a sufficient guarantee of the approbation with which this little book will be received.

Yours for Heaven,
WILLIAM HENRY SHERWOOD.

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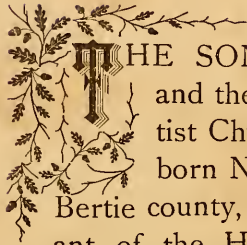


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CHARLES B. W. GORDON.

Charles Benjamin William Gordon,



THE SON of Nancy and Daniel Gordon, and the present Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Petersburg, Virginia, was born November 1st, 1861, at Coalrairie, Bertie county, North Carolina. He is a descendant of the Holly family and heir to ancestral greatness, with no compeer except General Nat. Turner. His great grand father, Charles Holly, was a slave, and was with his Master, as body-servant, during the great Revolutionary struggle.

Before the close of the war he had gained considerable reputation as a bold and fearless servant, who in many instances saved the life of his master, as well as the life of himself, and for the gallant services rendered his master during the war he was afterwards set free. He many times previously swore that he *would not* be a slave, and fought England as hard for the freedom of America as if he knew that he was to enjoy it as a free and honorable citizen. As a slave he was never treated, nor would he be. He was looked upon more as an overseer than a slave. He frequently dictated to his master the course best to pursue, which was always received with much respect for the person from which it came. Physically, Charles Brown Holly

was the Sampson of his age. It was related of him that he could take two men and crush their faces together. He never was whipped but by his mother, who always ruled him, even down to old age. For his great strength and hardihood, his name was changed from Charles Brown to Tom Bull. He was known throughout the eastern portion of North Carolina as a great and wonderful man. Tom Bull had only one child, Pricilla Holly, who married Willy Holly. She was simply an emblem of feminine virtue, that no worthy comparison can exaggerate. She was a very beautiful woman, and there was not a lazy bone in her frame; she knew how to please the most difficult. All that knew her wanted her. She had a strong, sturdy and unyielding moral rectitude, that nothing could induce her to part with. She was sold by her master, who inherited her. Pricilla, as we have already stated, was fair to look upon. Eldridge, her master, intruded on her and used every possible means to seduce her, but she resisted him to the last, and swore that she would die before she would yield to him; for that she was sold and forced to leave Nancy, the mother of the subject of our sketch, who was then a suckling baby and the idol of her heart, yet this embarrassing and heart-rending situation did not alter the firm and unshaken heart of the fair Ethiopian woman. Willy Holly, the husband of Pricilla, was a mechanic by trade, and won a wide reputation in the mechanical circle. He was a man of great mental ability. With the cunningness of his mind and his economi-

cal management, he saved up money enough to buy his time. Thus his far-seeing wisdom and active industry have set him free.

Nancy, the mother of little Charley, married Daniel Gordon, the father of Charley. At the hour when the nation was approximating the greatest of all events in the annals of her national history, when the star of freedom begun to rise, Charles B. W. Gordon is thrown into the world amidst the crisis of the Negro race—a son of thunder, a man of war, a child of heroic blood, as if born to rule the storm. In a short time thereafter his father, Daniel Gordon, who had been in ante bellum days a preacher, joins the Yankees.*

Before it was universally known that the Negroes would be free, the brave and heroic Nancy took little Charley in her arms, and went to Plymouth, where the Yankees were, who of course gave her protection. When the Mighty God spoke through the mouth of the cannon and dispelled the dark mist which enshrouded the South, bursting, at the same stroke, the shackles of four millions of human beings, and melting every slave pen within the shadow of the Capitol, Charles B. W. Gordon was only three years of age. Probably not a person who reads this has forgotten that, unfortunately for us, the colored race were all required by the Freedman's Bureau to re-marry or quit their former wives for life. Daniel Gordon did not re-marry Nancy. Thus the noble

* With intent to come back for his wife, but before he could return she (Nancy) had gone to the Yankees.

woman is left a widow, and her children, the offsprings of her and Daniel Gordon, are fatherless. Hence the act that made the fortunes of thousands of African boys, legitimate heirs of the fathers, and deeply laid for all time to come the foundation of their fortunes and education, threatened the prospects of this promising youth and offered poverty and penury in its stead. But born of a pious mother, which is always the best sign, (but probably not the only good one), he is destined to lead his thousands to the portals of heaven. Moses, the meek but most heroic of all the Israelites, came into the world at just such a crisis as Charles Gordon. Thrown into the dashing waves of the Nile, tossed among the bullrushes of her mad current, he who is to face the proud monarch of hell and protest against his tyranical sceptre, and sound aloud the trumpet of Jehovah in the land of bondage, later to lead them forth in solid phalanx, a once enslaved and downtrodden, but now free and jubilant people, is protected by an angel of heaven until found by Pharoah's daughter, and rescued from the raging seas, and placed at the feet of the Egyptian sage, where he is instructed in all the arts of the age.

Nancy, the unfortunate widow, is left like a noble hen to scratch for her brood. She was a seamstress of the highest domestic accomplishments. Taught by necessity and prompted by an undying ardor, she summoned all her discouraged efforts to energetic millinery workmanship, which art was then at a very low ebb among African women. Nancy

worked hard and faithfully at her needle to raise her children in credit. She sang sweet songs of her brightest visions, and breathed many earnest prayers for the greatness of her children. She was, of all her sex, the most admirable. She was possessed of but a very limited education, as were most mothers of the African race, yet she constantly read the Bible to her children and strictly performed its precepts in her family, which is always sure to result in great and powerful men and women for God and their country. Despite the shock of widowhood, to which she was suddenly reduced by the Freedman's Bureau, she gained with her needle, in a short time, the means requisite to educate her children.

It will probably not be out of place to mention just here that the old proverb is not altogether without significance, that "What is bred in the bone will not come out of the flesh;" for, as did her mother, Pricilla, she stands to-day a living monument of untarnished virtue and true womanhood. Although abandoned by her husband and left at liberty to love and marry another, she has ever since remained sole mistress of her person, and strictly devoted her time and talent to the religious, moral and intellectual training of her family, which had sprung up during coverture in ante bellum days.

Nancy Gordon remained at Plymouth, North Carolina, until Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation went into effect, when she moved to Roanoke Island, where Charles entered school, being about five years of age, to Mr. Thomas Nixon. He was among

the first students that were enrolled, and he displayed, within a few weeks, such powerful talent, and made such rapid advances in his studies, that he was the acknowledged genius of the public school on Roanoke Island. When Charles had been in school one session, his fame as a speller had gone over the Island. He stood at the head of his class, and did not allow a word to pass him. On the days when the school would have spelling matches, Charles was sure to wear the laurels. On some Fridays the scholars made speeches. In his first speech, delivered in one of these Friday evening exercises, Charles grew exceedingly eloquent, creating quite an intense interest and holding the school spell-bound; meantime the teacher was gazing on the noble little orator as if a spell of amazement and wonder had captivated the whole school. It may justly be said that on this occasion Charles portrayed the hidden treasures of wisdom and the germ of oratorical power with which he is endowed.

Unfortunately for Charley, he was forced to quit school and go home as soon as he was large enough to be of service there. His mother had a large family and no one to look to but herself and God. She therefore worked hard, and made all around her work who was able. Much to the regret of the boy, whose aspirations had swollen so high, he leaves school and accepts the situation.

Charles had a sister, Huldian Gordon, who was the first colored public school teacher in North Carolina. In those days it was very difficult to teach a

public school. The vouchers were to be properly filled out and sent to Washington, but Hulda was the pioneer, in that she broke the ice, and her hand was the first of all our throng of colored teachers to smite the rock of the public school fund, from which so many streams are now pouring forth.

His mother now moves to Perquimans County, North Carolina, where Charley is compelled to work; meantime he studied every day and every night. On rainy days, when he could not work, he would go to school to his sister, who was teaching in the public schools of that county. Thus Charles grappled with disadvantages and difficulties. He would enter school in the leisure months, after the crops were laid by, and study until the crops called him again; hence he made use of every moment of his time. Charles had fixed rules to study by. At night, when he had finished the lessons that were to be recited the next day in the school room, he would ramble amidst his little grabbed-up library for the best speeches, from which he would select the wisest, notwithstanding they were hard to commit to memory. Whenever the children were called out, Charles would step forth with something new, fresh and vivid. In this way Charles B. W. Gordon laid the corner-stone of oratory which was so soon to distinguish him and make his name so great and laudable.



CHAPTER II.

RURAL LIFE OF GORDON.

When Charles was fourteen years of age, he asked his brother-in-law what was the best thing for him to pursue that he might give his mother a better support, as well as school himself. His brother suggested that they would farm on shares—in partnership. This was agreed upon and sanctioned by Charles' mother. To carry out this project they purchased a yoke of oxen—it was the custom in those days to have the use of an ox two years for breaking. This was simply fun for the high-spirited youth. Although he had a hard time with his oxen, he succeeded in conquering them and subjecting them to the yoke. He was once, during the time he was engaged in breaking oxen, thrown from the cart and barely escaped death. They, however, had great success the first year. By hard, earnest labor they were able in the fall to house one hundred barrels of corn, and ship three bales of cotton, and put up fifteen hundred pounds of pork, beside raising a large amount of small grain, such as beans, peas, potatoes, &c. Thus they had means and facilities for widening out their prospects for a better farm.

Meanwhile, Charles' mind was maturing steadily and his muscular strength fast developing its resources. Not unlike most boys of the rural circle, Charles had grown very wicked—had a great love for dancing parties. The prosperity of the first year,

therefore, opened up a convenience for the furtherance of this amusement. They bought, in the fall, a fine horse, and commenced to farm on a broader basis; rented a two-horse farm. With two oxen and one horse they set out for another crop, having firmly resolved to gain an independent fortune and a good education. Charles would sometimes ride ten or twelve miles to attend a dancing spree. In the gay circle of his companions, he was always the master player. Whenever a candy party was to be had, the ladies not unfrequently wished to know if Charley Gordon would be there. If told that he would not, they would say, "well, there won't be any fun, then."

At a time like that, we may readily see the many attractions with which Charles was surrounded. The colored people had but a short time been free, and piety was no virtue among them. With them, to be great was to be gay; and Charles always endeavored to adapt himself to the times and circumstances, as well as the society with which he is surrounded. But while he was wild and sinful, yet some traits of his character, amidst all of that folly, partook of a strange bearing to that of most boys. He had an unbounded affection for Sunday school, and was strict to attend it. He held the position of teacher and was generally regarded as a very important factor. In fact, all through his boyhood he was a leader. When at school he would organize armies of the school boys and drill them for war, with as much influence over them as ever Washing-

ton had over the American troops. This intrinsic talent to lead and conduct public affairs, grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength, developing itself at every stage of his boyhood and manifesting itself in all his conduct, with but a single exception. Like a "chip of the old block," he would fight before he would be imposed upon, at any time or in any place. This, however, is regarded by those who know Charles Gordon, to be one of those inherent dispositions that came down through the trace of a hundred years of ancestry, and is still a living impulse of Charles—to respect every person's rights, and to demand respect from them in return. In the fall of the second year, they housed one hundred and fifty barrels of corn and twelve bales of cotton, besides greatly increasing their supplies of meat, peas, potatoes, beans, &c.

The same fall a brother of Charles', who had been living in the North, seeking rest and finding none, came home. Charles, however, concluded to take him as a partner; so they divided the spoils, the former partner being only a brother-in-law. Charles and his new partners' labors were attended also with great success. During these years of rural life, Charles was studying his books as attentively as ever. He would, after working hard in the day, walk three miles at night to attend night-school. This he kept up regularly until the leisure season, then he would go to school in the day, thus making every edge cut that would cut, and such as would not cut he made them bruise. The young men of

the neighborhood had a Debating Society, of which Charles was a member. Charles was such a power in argument that the young men of the lodge finally became so apprehensive of him that it was hard to find one willing to take the lead, if Charles Gordon was on the opposite side. He was nominated for the most prominent places within the gift of his companions, and was always elected without opposition. This, however, was for his keen and penetrable understanding and his parliamentary management, as well as to avoid the volleys of oratorical thunderbolts that he commonly dealt upon the heads of his opponents.

CHAPTER III.

GORDON IN HIGH SCHOOL—HIS SPEECH IN ELIZABETH CITY.

He was secretary of Hurtford Sunday school, and was chosen a delegate to represent it in the Sunday school union, or Eastern Sunday School Convention, in 1877, which convened at Bethel. In this convention of over two hundred delegates, Charles Gordon was the centre of attraction. There were prizes offered for the three best speeches to be delivered during the sitting of the Union. There were many contestants, two of which were Gordons. Till now, it is not decided which was the better orator, Charles B. W. Gordon or his cousin, B. S. Gordon, but this day decided the question. Charles

won the first prize and B. S. Gordon won the second. That Charles Gordon was the coming orator of Eastern North Carolina, was a foregone conclusion. While he spoke, sudden stillness prevailed until, when Charles would draw such fine pictures of the logical situation of the Negro, painting every paragraph with the richest and yet the most simple and suitable language that a Webster could use, the audience would burst forth with loud applause, which told that he was playing upon the cord that reached their heart as well as exciting their wonder and admiration. When the convention adjourned for dinner, the speech of Mr. Gordon was the topic of conversation, and wherever on the ground he might be standing with his associates, they would point him out.

During these years Charles' brother married, and Charles became very tired of farming, although he had been blessed with repeated success; but he had set his aspiration too high to be clogged and tied down upon a farm. His mother had always told him that God would open up a way for him. He now said to his mother, "I want to study and prepare myself for the bar;" "I want to be a lawyer." His mother replied: "I had rather, my son, to have you be a Christian." This expression sank deep down into his heart, and haunted his mind wherever it wandered. But having purchased her a comfortable home and settling her, he again avows his desire to go off to high school, as he had advanced so far that the common school could do him no good. His

mother considered long and well, then she said: "Charles, you are now going into your eighteenth year. You have been dutiful to your mother; you have had a poor chance for an education. I now give you freedom, and you can make yourself a man." Charles immediately wrote to Mr. Rooks Turner, the principal of Elizabeth City Normal School, and applied for admission. He entered that school in 1878, after having stood a most rigid examination entered the middle course and walked square into the school Lyceum. He distinguished himself in the first argument he made, and in every recitation he proved his genius. His fame soon spread over the city as the orator of the school. He made rapid advances in his studies, and read law at intervals or at such time as he could get from his text books. Charles was what one might call a hard student, and whatever he learned he learned it once forever. One of his mottos was, "Hold every foot of ground you get;" this he always did, as will be seen from his history.

CHAPTER IV.

GORDON A TEACHER—A CHANGE OF SPIRIT—HIS PROFESSIONAL CHOICE COUNTERACTED—A SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSIONARY, REVIVALIST, &C.

While he was in school, the A. M. 'E. Church of Elizabeth City gave an entertainment. There was a very valuable prize given the lady who, by her

energy and perseverance, raised the most money, and a speech was to be delivered in honor of that lady, as well as in the furtherance of that cause. The lady who won the prize, to-wit, Miss Clara Barnett, and the managers of the entertainment, selected Mr. C. B. W. Gordon as orator of the day to deliver that speech and present the prize. When it was known in the city that C. B. W. Gordon would speak, it was easy to foresee what a crowd of both white and colored people would be there. At an extraordinarily early hour the house was densely packed with both white and colored, (notwithstanding an admission fee was charged at the door). When the moment was up, Mr. H. Cale, who was then the representative in the Legislature of North Carolina from Pasquotank County, arose and introduced Mr. Gordon in the following happy style:

“Ladies and Gentlemen: I rise to introduce to you one of North Carolina’s most promising sons; one who, if he continues as he has started, is destined to carve his name upon the very top round of his country’s honor, ere many months go by—(applause)—one upon whose gallant brow is wreathed the very token of fame and approaching greatness. (Applause.) The rural lad, the city genius, the rustic farmer, yet the polished suburban flower; in short, I rise to introduce to you the coming orator of Eastern North Carolina. (Applause.) I need not say that I refer to the right worthy Charles B. W. Gordon, who will address you.” (Gordon—applause; Gordon—loud applause).

A small, slender and rather delicate looking form arose from the audience, and while advancing to the rostrum he is met by two gentlemen, who escorted him, while the crowd burst forth a long and loud applause. Mr. Gordon ascended the rostrum, made a slight bow, stood erect, lifted his brow while a gradual smile broke over his youthful face. Opening his mouth he said :

"Ladies and Gentlemen : While I feel highly flattered by my venerable friend who introduced me in such complimentary terms, and in so magnanimous a style, I am, nevertheless, happy and proud, as well as honored and flattered, with the privilege to speak to you on this auspicious and momentous occasion. I am very much obliged to my friend for the good things he has said of me, while I fear the manner in which I have been introduced to you will cause you to be disappointed, which, if you are expecting a fine speech from me, you certainly will be. Yet, if the hard, earnest labor which I have undergone in grappling with difficulties and disadvantages, have assured my friend Cale of my future greatness, it is all the more gratifying to me. It is probably my first duty to congratulate you upon the rapid progress you have made and the many noble deeds you have done, but I will leave that to the task of another and content myself with inciting you to nobler researches and stiring you up to more energy, perseverance and self-reliance.

While we have made progress, such, too, as has had no precedent in the history of races, and while

we are happy over the worthy achievements our hands have wrought, and the inexpressible boon of freedom which we enjoy, let us not forget that there is yet very much to be done before our people will be great or our freedom be permanent. But we are to persevere. It is an old but true proverb that "those who persevere will succeed." This old proverb was born with the wisest sages of antiquity, and came down through the whole line of posterity, touching at every point of destiny and proving the truth of its assertion by the thousands of failures who trust to other theories. How many now sit down and hug the delusive phantom of luck and fortune? Men blessed with all the glorious gifts of nature, yet they are sad failures, and why? Because they fail to persevere. We are, too, apt to cast our short-coming at the gate of fortune, and excuse ourselves from the contest by saying, we can't; we have not talent, and that we were unfortunate. You are just what you make of yourself. Every man is the architect of his own fortune. If we have luck, we must have pluck. That undeserving parties sometimes succeed, while honest, energetic effort fails, I will not attempt to deny; but this is a rare occurrence, and is often attended with circumstances as incomprehensible as the occurrence is rare; but if history be philosophy teaching by examples, then we must rest our logic where the verdict is cast.

Was it fortune that made Napoleon the greatest and most victorious man of the eighteenth century? So may some think, but I do not. Why the old,

venerable soldier, Moreau, had the same chance. In the time when France had no leader, and was at the mercy of all the world, and forty thousand armed soldiers were at her gate, Moreau had the chance but refused to march against the enemy. It was late in the night when the terror-stricken convention sat. All was in consternation, when one Barras arose and broke the awful stillness of that chamber. "I know who can defend us," he nervously said, "it is the young Corsican officer, Napoleon Bonaparte. He is a man who will not stand upon ceremony." They called Napoleon down and asked him if he was willing to take the responsibility of defending France. "Yes," he replied. When asked if he knew the magnitude of the situation and the disadvantages attending the defence, he said, "I do." The next morning when the sun arose, Napoleon was ready to defend the convention, although he had only five thousand men, while the enemy had forty thousand. But watch the brave lad, only seventeen years of age, riding at the head of that fearless few. The awe-stricken convention which appointed him, is still in session. Napoleon, with his gun loaded to the muzzle, was ready for the first fire, but he would not assume the responsibility of opening the contest. He did not wait long. The first volley opening upon the little handful of defenders was the signal for the instantaneous discharge of all the artillery, which belched forth its slaughter and death till the whole pavement was covered with the dead and wounded. The day was won, and Napoleon

had taken his first advance to fame. Was it luck? No; for Moreau had the same opportunity and failed. The fact is that the young Corsican soldier had perseverance and pluck. Oliver Cromwell had a birthday that he always regarded as a lucky day, yet he died on that very day.

“A man is mortal till his work is done,” may be true in some sense, but not true in fatalism.” Was it luck which raised Andrew Johnson from the tailor’s bench in Raleigh and carried him to the Chief Magistracy of the Nation? No, no. Such men as Johnson, Clay and Webster, would have risen in spite of any circumstances. Dr. Johnson has well said, “all complaints against fortune are unjust.” I never knew a man neglected who was possessed of merit. Well matured and well disciplined talent is sure of a market, provided it exerts itself, but it must not cower at home and expect to be sought for. Perseverance is a sure road to success. There is fortune for the dullest of us if we will only bring it into active exercise. A barking dog is worth more than a sleeping lion. (Applause.) Many a man has lost his hold on the world because he lost his perseverance. It is perseverance that crowns men with honor that lives while they sleep the sleep of the dead. It amasses wealth and brings success to well-directed efforts. (Applause.) Men have only to resolve and then act out the resolution. Do not stand still and wait for something to happen, but go to work and make something happen. Don’t wait for something to turn up, but with your own hands turn

something up. (Applause.) "At it, and always at it," was the motto of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church. (Applause.) "Learn to labor and to wait," was worthy of the pen of the learned Longfellow, and is worthy of adoption by the ambitious youth who is anxious for success. The harvest does not follow the next day after the seed are sown, but must have time to germinate, and bring forth after its kind. Patient perseverance is the price which the ambitious youth must pay for success, and every item is paid in advance. The mountain top is reached by plodding up it step by step. (Applause.) The mighty stone wall around China was reared by laying rock upon rock. The mammoth structure of the National Capitol was formed by laying stone upon stone. So we must build our way in the world, and rear for ourselves a monument that will speak for us when we shall have played our part in the drama of life. (Applause.)

Truly we have been slaves and deprived of advantages, but we have been free thirteen years—long enough to outgrow every mark of servitude and every sign of slavery. (Applause.) Shall that be any reason why any one of us should not be great? It was none for B. K. Bruce. It didn't alter the will of Douglas. (Applause.) Are there difficulties in the way? These were made only to be conquered and overcome, and in overcoming to develop strength. If we would be successful we must be energetic. What made Demosthenes the great Grecian orator, but repeated energetic strug-

gles? I pity, yes, pity the poor blind-guided novice who lulls to sleep his energies and dissipates his mind with the fearful delusion that the stars in their courses are fighting for him. Never was there a sophistry more foolish than this, that "to be born lucky is better than to be born rich." (Applause.) Energy and perseverance will conquer in the long run, despite the circumstances. It will always outstrip mere brilliancy; the list of mighty names on the annals of our history proves this. Many who in their youth were remarkable for nothing but stupidity have, in after years, achieved fame. Julius Cæsar, the conquerer of the world, when a youth, was very ordinary in mind and aspiration. It took a long and weary season of the severest experience to arouse his dormant energies and develop his astonishing ability to command unconquerable legions and give the age the type of unbounded ambition. Sheridan, the brilliant and witted orator, in his boyhood, was regarded as a stupid dunce. There is no royal road to success. To gain it, one must make up his mind to work hard at his purpose. (Applause.)

Connected with these facts is self-reliance, a quality that should not be overlooked. We colored people of the South are in the habit of looking and relying on the North for the perpetuity of our freedom and our grandeur, but we make a mistake. The North boasts of having freed the Negro, which I grant, yet I have always regarded it as the outcome of Providential arrangement. God sent it, if

the devil brought it; and it behooves us to make the best of it. (Applause.) If God sent the North to free us, He did not send it, nor will not send it, to take care of us. (Applause.) God never meant that you should be maintained at the expense of another. If we ever educate, our own effort must do it. What if we begin poor? If you commence life at the bottom round, it is no lower than the greatest men of this century started. Look to no man nor set of men, but to God and yourself. (Applause.) We are now without excuse, and much is expected of us. Let us show to the world that the Negro can and will be an independent and intelligent people. (Applause.)

A word to the young people, and I am done. Young gentlemen, I look over the door of your Legislative hall, and what do I see? I see written there, wanted! I look over the door of the United States Congress, and see written there, wanted! I look over your farm-yard and see, wanted! Look over your machine shop and see, wanted! Look over your merchandise and see, wanted! Look over your school room and see, wanted! Look over your publishing house and see, wanted! Who is wanted? Men wanted! Educated men, industrious men, intelligent men, refined men, skilled men; that is who is wanted. (Loud applause.) Young ladies, look over the doors of your literary houses and you see, wanted! Look over your manufactory and you see, wanted! At the gates of your printing and sculpture buildings, wanted! At your

music hall, wanted! In your school room, wanted! Over your dwelling house, wanted! Over your decorated parlors, wanted! Who is wanted? Ladies, educated ladies, industrious ladies, accomplished ladies, refined ladies, modest ladies, energetic ladies and progressive ladies; that is who is wanted. (Applause.) Then let us prepare ourselves, for we will be called upon to fill these important places. (Applause.)”

This is only a portion of his speech, the main manuscript having been misplaced. After this speech Mr. Gordon was greeted and congratulated on every hand by both white and colored.

At the moment when the prize was to be presented, Mr. Gordon walked to the decorated rostrum, lifted the valuable prize and called out Miss Chlora Barnett. Bowing, he said:

“*Dear Miss:* The high, the glorious opportunity has been afforded me of presenting to you this valuable prize, which your energetic labors have so richly merited, and which bespeaks the many achievements that are within your reach. While there were many who honorably struggled, you have the honor of excelling. As you excel in this contest, so you will in every one if you will continue. This prize, although beautiful and valuable, is only a token of that glorious and incorruptible prize which awaits you at the end of the race of life. It points you away to the paradistical regions of an unbecclouded heaven. In the name of perseverance and the donor, I give it you. (Another loud applause.)

Charles remained in school till 1880, when he began to teach at Brick Kiln, in Purquimans county. It was a hard county to get the first grade certificate in, but Charles received the first grade. In the fall of the same year he was elected principal of the Windsor public school. This was a large school, and required a man of considerable tact, but Charles Gordon was acknowledged to be the best teacher that they ever had, before or since. During Charles' second session in school, an awful change came over him. He had surveyed the whole professional circle, and made choice of the legal profession. He had calculated the number of months he would need to stay in school, and the expense attending it; weighed them carefully and minutely, placed them before him, and embarked for the shore. He had not sailed long before a mighty storm arose and the winds dashed with almost boundless fury against his foundering bark. The dark mist of his sins had hidden his star from his eyes forever. Like Saul of Tarsus, he cries to God and is saved. What a glorious change! His aspirations changed with his spirit. He is not satisfied with knowing that it is well with his own soul, but he is anxious about the souls of others. He is filled with the Holy Spirit, and as was said of one of old, he went about doing good. He was appointed Sunday School Missionary for the Union, and established many Sunday schools. He conducted a revival among his scholars with great success, meantime he felt that God had enjoined on him to preach the gospel.

CHAPTER V.

GORDON AT RICHMOND INSTITUTE—A LECTURER, A
POET AND A TOURIST.

To prepare himself for this calling, he opened correspondence with Mr. C. H. Corey, President of Richmond Institute, in September, 1881, and closed school at Windsor, North Carolina, to enter that school. It was a sad time with his patrons at Windsor; they said they could not do without Mr. Gordon. Many said that if he left the school was ruined. Well, to write just as it was, language is inadequate. Everything was done to induce Mr. Gordon to remain, and to have him teach on for them, but the Lord had spoken and Charles had responded. He made a fine mark in Windsor.

During the vacation of 1882, Mr. Gordon travelled in the Eastern portion of North Carolina, and preached and lectured with great success.

He wrote two poems in 1882, one dedicated to the memory of Rev. L. W. Boone, and another entitled "The Good Shepherd." Both of these poems were read with interest by thousands, and won for Mr. Gordon a considerable poetical reputation. Besides these, he commonly corresponded with papers, contributing many rich essays on various subjects.

An extract from the volume of Poems entitled "The Good Shepherd."

HELP THE HEATHEN.

There is a land of grief and woe,
A land far across the ocean wave,
Where heathen nations know not God,
Nor seek to find the blessed way.

This is the way the nation is gone,
 Since in darkness they were born ;
 The way of God they have not known,
 They bow to idols of wood and stone.

They work in darkness with great delight,
 They seek the road to keen despair ;
 Thousands are travelling without the light,
 Thousands have made their journey there.

It was for them that Jesus died,
 But His name they have not known ;
 The Shepherd here has given the 'larm,
 But unto them he has not gone.

The voice of God is calling now,
 For soldiers strong and bold ;
 To carry the gospel to them there,
 That Jesus' name there may be told.

Oh, that we could hear some one say,
 "Lord here am I, send me !
 I'll take the gospel and carry it there,
 That they may know salvation's free."

If you cannot go, you can give your means,
 To help to send the gospel there ;
 That the heathen may know the name of God,
 And for judgment day make some prepare.

If you cannot give the rich man's sum,
 You can give a penny or a shilling ;
 If you cannot pay the preacher's full fare,
 You can show to the Lord that you're willing.

He returned to Richmond Institute and resumed his studies October, 1882. He was employed as general agent for a large publication house, and made an extensive tour through the Eastern portion of his native State. In another chapter is given a few of the dates and incidents of this tour. •

CHAPTER VI.

GORDON'S TOUR IN NORTH CAROLINA.

He left Richmond on the 20th of May, 1883, on his way for North Carolina; reached Norfolk on the same day, and on the night of the 26th he preached in Bute Street Baptist Church. From thence he went to Hertford, North Carolina, on the 28th of May. He remained two days, during which time he preached. Found the people of Hertford making very poor progress. On the 30th, he arrived at Elizabeth City. He found the people still on the way up the hill, every sphere of life showing advancement; found Rev. M. Fisher in charge of the A. M. E. Church, and Rev. E. Griffin in charge of the Baptist. Stopped with brother Frank Simmons, first deacon of the Baptist Church; found his wife a great worker in the missionary cause—yes, I may say she is worthy to be classed among the best workers. She is leading a missionary meeting in the church that he helped to establish and assisted in organizing. He is just now in receipt of a letter from her, stating that she has a great many members. On Friday, the 1st of June, he was requested to deliver an address to the young men of Prof. R. Turner's Normal School. When he entered the school room he was greeted by a long, unbroken cheer from many old acquaintances and school-mates, who had assembled to give him a warm greeting. As Charles was formerly a student of this school, the reader can imagine with what gratitude and enthusiasm he was received.

Mr. Turner, after making a few remarks of congratulation, and expressing his gladness to meet Mr. Gordon, his former student, and seeing him in so promising a career, introduced him to the school. The following is an extract from the speech:

“Mr. President and Fellow Students: I feel especially honored in being called on to address you, although I have prepared nothing new or interesting to say to you. I shall only undertake to encourage you in your efforts to educate yourselves, and to prepare for the many places of importance that awaits you.

Character is not a garment, to be put on all at once, but is of continual growth day by day, like the island of the sea, which begins with a few pebbles, and by a constant growth it may become a body of itself, covered over with God’s green carpet. So is man’s intellectual growth. He came into the world an unimproved creature, endowed with five senses, also a mind capable of indefinite expansion, and by a daily growth may acquire great knowledge. As the island stands in its beauty, so may the man in the grandeur and majesty of his manhood.

A man with an integrity of purpose, and who has faith in that purpose, whose object is to do good, will find the road to success. I claim that all men should go forth with an object in view. When the blind man came to Christ, near Jericho, the attention of Christ was first attracted by his cry, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me;” and when the man was brought near, the first words of Jesus

were, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" And the blind man's reply was, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Having learned his desire, he said unto him, "Receive thy sight." The question is, would the blind man have received his sight had he not desired it? I venture to say no.

A young man, whose aim is to make his mark in life, will meet with many oppositions. Troubles come in such ways that at times everything seems dark and gloomy. You should always regard difficulties as being stepping stones to success. Never stop to ponder over life's work, but as has been said, "first be sure that you are right, and then go forward." Do like a man; choose a purpose in life, and allow no opportunity to pass without embracing it. You should remember that, in forming life's purpose, no man can have a successful career who has reference to himself alone. Therefore, we are under the greatest obligation to form this purpose with reference to our fellow-man, for "no man can live to himself alone." The second and great command is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself;" therefore, we should live equally for the good of others as for ourselves. When we are building and strengthening our own characters, we should be building and strengthening equally the characters of others. By so doing, you may accomplish a work, which will stand upon the pages of history after you shall have passed from existence.

Young men, you have entered upon a life of infinite possibilities, and one of the grandest oppor-

tunities. God has endowed you with faculties capable of indefinite development. You are upon the arena of life in an age in which true manhood and efficiency are in great demand, because your labor will go towards the making of our educational and religious institutions and public government, not for the present only, but for the future. You will soon be called on to fill responsible positions. Many of you will be governors of families—you will have to control educational and religious institutions; you must make and execute the laws for the advancement and protection of society. Every act, according to its character, is constantly making a living influence for good or for evil. In our daily life we are putting influences into motion which will pulsate through the veins of humanity, and down to eternity.

No young man, with a sound mind, can stand at the entrance of life and view future generations rising up before him, endowed with immortality, knowing that their destiny will depend in a great measure upon the young men of the day, without realizing the necessity of bringing about a living influence by his honesty and daily deportment, which will create a burning zeal upon the hearts of those by whom he is surrounded; that will constrain them to go forth upon that great enterprise of life, and to carry into effect such plans as will create a well regulated system of education in every family.

Young men, you are under a great responsibility, not for what you are, but for what you ought to be.

You are not only under an obligation to do all for which you have the ability to do, but for all which you can acquire an ability to perform. The man with one talent was not condemned because he had but one, but because he did not gain another. If we are endowed with one talent, we must gain another to it. Young men, your being great depends upon your own efforts. Nothing can be accomplished without labor. Every man who has ever lived in history, obtained his ability by daily toil.

Perseverance is genius, and
 Along the lines of truth
 It will be rewarded.

If you want to be noble,
 Work and toil to make the way.
 If you want to be happy,
 Seek to find the brighter day.

Though your way be dark and dreary,
 And your heart be sick with fear,
 Never stop in doubt to wonder,
 Though you may have to shed a tear."

This is not all of the speech, but simply an extract which we chanced to stumble upon in our research for facts and incidents.

During his stay in Elizabeth City he preached at the Baptist Church, and by request delivered an address in the same church on the 4th of June. The following is an extract from the lecture:

"Friends and Brethren: We cannot say that we know every man's responsibilities, neither can we say that we know every one's particular circum-

stances ; but we have a knowledge, every one of us for ourselves, to the effect that we may engage in a good work ; yes, a vigorous work, one that would give us a fair degree of success through life.

It matters not whether a man be young or near the middle of life, he may have forty or fifty years of usefulness before him. What, can he not accomplish in this time a work that will stand for years, and remain for the generation which are to succeed him ? Yes, by acquired ability he can accomplish a work that will stand upon the pages of history when he shall have passed away.

Some men boast about having great natural ability, and they make great failures in life. Man is unfit for his life's work unless he has undergone a process of discipline of mind and head. To succeed in life, this must be done. That there must be the natural ability, as capital with which to start, I frankly admit ; but there must be a careful development of these powers, and these powers, for their successful development, depend upon self-effort.

The arm of a child pinioned to its side, wastes and dies. The same is true of every faculty of mind and heart. When growth ends, decay begins, and as our arm may be destroyed by disuse, so may our capacity for truth. Development, growth, therefore, comes by effort. There is no truth more clearly demonstrated than that great men and great achievements come not by chance. Hiram R. Revels and John M. Langston became great men by investing their talents and acquiring other talents.

All great men became great because of acquired ability. Natural endowment constitutes the man embryo, and it is highly essential to the being of man, for "as the flower is in the bud, so is the general or statesman in the boy." But men generally have only enough natural ability to start with, and along the lines of well directed efforts, they day by day acquire more for this life's work. For instance, a young man says that he has been called to preach. At the time of his calling he may not be able to teach the smallest child. He has good natural ability, but to teach the Bible he must have acquired ability, and to receive which, he puts himself under an instructor. Years are given in the disciplining of the mind and head before he enters upon his work. What is true in this case was true in the cases of Fred. Douglas and John M. Langston; if not in the college walls, it was by some benevolent friend.

Some men fail in life because they fail to find the work for which they were made. They try to do what God has intended that other men should do. Every man should seek to find a sphere, and then go forth with some decision of character. Success depends upon self-effort. Never be an imitator of other men; be an independent thinker.

"Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment."

It matters not what a man's calling is, he should remember to live a successful and useful life. He

must carry an influence daily that will enter the house and hearts of the people for good that cannot be limited by time. He who would live to be a success, should remember that the beauty of life is self-controlment. Some men make great failures in life because they fail to control their resentful passions. Man should learn to govern himself, and then he can better govern his people.

“Beware of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.”

The man who intends to be felt among the nations of earth, will not find every man his friend. Every man owes his success to himself. He who fails to toil will fail to succeed. Douglas and Langston have stirred and swayed the hearts of nations for good only after years of toil, of rigid discipline. Newton was able to say why and by what law the apple fell from the tree to the ground, only after years of growth and discipline. There must be application to the work in hand. Every power must be brought in action to a direct consecration to the work in hand. There can be no growth in any direction that is not entered upon enthusiastically, and the higher a man places his mark the greater will be his achievement.”

All of these exercises of Mr. Gordon's were attended with large crowds of old and young—many to criticise, some to skepticise, some to wonder, some to greet, and many to admire. Scores of heartfelt wishes for his success were breathed upon

him as he passed through the streets of the old city, where he had taken his first entrance to fame. Not a few invitations to dine and tea were accorded Mr. Gordon, which he was compelled to decline, owing to the limited time he had to remain in that city.

From thence he went to Edenton, N. C., where he preached twice; from thence to Plymouth, N. C., from thence to Windsor, N. C., from thence to Washington, N. C., from thence to Tarboro, N. C., from thence to Wilson, N. C., from thence to Goldsboro, N. C.; from thence he went to Kingston, N. C., from thence to Newbern, N. C. He visited many other cities, but these are the principal ones.

CHAPTER VII.

REMARKS AND COMMENTS.

The whole tour of Mr. Gordon through the old North State was one grand travel of success and enthusiasm. Whenever it was known that he would be at any particular point, great preparation would be made to give him a pleasant stay in their midst; but the prime point in his tour is the sway of his ministerial influences. He was heard of from town to town as the pulpit orator. His preaching was attended by astonishingly large crowds. His preaching, however, was not confined to the Baptist church alone; he very often preached in all the churches of a city before he left it, and in whatever city he was not received, which was very few, he left on the

next train, if it was a freight train. In all of Mr. Gordon's course in preaching at different points, and to different people, the same stalwart, manly appeal to the wicked prevailed. Everywhere he lifted his sword men fell before him; in whatever society he was thrown he still lifted up Jesus to the people, with seemingly an irresistible influence. Such men are truly the men to preach in this age.

God calls for valiant-hearted men to do his work, such as are not afraid to launch out in the deep and let down their nets and sound aloud the trump of God in the holy mountains. Charles Gordon seems to have been born for that sphere. Wherever he went he did not scruple to open his mouth for God, and the word did not return void, but was blessed with gracious out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, and resulted in the reclaiming of scores of sinners. There was something magnetic about his preaching that gave it a power of attraction. What it was, with the exception of the Holy Ghost, history is left to conjecture. But when and where this young man was to preach, great crowds turned out to hear him. Every step he made was onward and upward. His looks soon betook the manor of his disposition. But yesterday a gay, sporting, frolicsome youth, to-day a model Christian; but yesterday the centre-flower of the gay circle of his companions, to-day the solemn spokesman, whose only conversation is religion and its solemnity. What a change! Truly "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

No heart rejoiced more under the preached gospel by this young herald of the cross, than his faithful mother, who had consecrated him to the Master years before, and who had prayed for his confirmation. Now she lives to witness the fruits of her earnest labors ripen into a monumental Christian soldier—a workman that need not be ashamed. She now sees, with the eyes from which so many tears have fallen in anxious meditation over her child, the Father accept him as his ambassador, and crown his labors with abundant success. Charles had consecrated himself fully to God, and laid hold of the high calling, with all his soul in the work. This is the key-note to the work of preaching the gospel—consecration. To do anything successfully, one must be consecrated to that work. The apostle has it right when he declares, “Though I speak with the tongue of an angel, if I have not charity I become as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol.” His preaching was filled with proofs that he himself felt what he preached. He went about it like he loved it, and dealt out the gospel as one having authority. Boldly and fearlessly he proclaimed the unsearchable riches of the word. He seemed to have but one aim and but one end in view. The salvation of souls was the grand object of his whole life, and the soul and centre of his preaching. The manner of delivery seemed to add an unusual flavor to his preaching, an essence which captivates and carries the imagination upward. His sermons are of two-fold substance—body and soul. The body is the

word, its sentences, its figures of speech, full of illustration, rhetoric, logic and philosophy—it combines literary, logical and oratorical enforcement, by which the intelligence is captivated, the ear pleased, the taste gratified, and man is put into a mood of enrapture. This is the part in which the genius and power of the preacher exhibits themselves, in which the power of argument wrestles with the great subjects on which it writhes its strength, and in which the tact, taste, skill and imagination of the man in the pulpit do their finest posturing; which has its part in getting praise and creating sensation. Then there is an unusual glow of the brightest lustre about him—something of the soul which Christ had touched, which is kindred with uper worldliness, which so distinguished him. There is something of faith, hope and love, something unselfish, solicitous of doing good, genuine, spirit-seeking, unsensual, pure, which is heavenly in its virtues, and helpful affectionateness, which separates Christ from man and indicates his divineness. This lights up the sentences of his sermons, and breathes into them the quickening sparks of the hallowed fire, and charges it with the power of healing, comforting and blessing.



CHAPTER VIII.

GORDON RECEIVES A DOUBLE CALL—HE MEDITATES AND FINALLY ACCEPTS THE CHARGE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PETERSBURG, VA.—HIS FIRST SERMON—OUTLINES—THE RESPONSIBILITIES INCUMBENT ON THE PASTOR OF THIS CHURCH—HIS MANNER OF PREACHING, &C.

He entered school again in the fall of 1883, and remained until January, 1884, when he received a call to the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, of Richmond, Va. In the same month he was called to the charge of the largest membership known to history, between four and five thousand, the First Baptist Church, of Petersburg, Va. This call is one of the mysteries of God's ways. This church had set down on young men as pastors. Rev. Gordon had never visited the church but once—then by special invitation—and is only twenty-three years of age and unmarried. Yet the whole church seems united on him as a pastor. No one vouched for him but God. This is an evidence that God has chosen no more men than he has prepared fields of labor for. The evidence of a man's being called to the work of the gospel ministry is evinced by his success. If after many years of hard labor the man is unable to accomplish anything, he may rest assured that he has hold of the wrong profession. To be a successful minister, a man must be endowed with *a power of will*. "Where there is a will there is a way;" not a Solomon, not a Plato, not a Harrington has said it,

but in the unpublished book of the Universe this wholesome truth is recorded, and the world accepts it as an authentic maxim. The world does not hesitate to believe it, and never will until it goes triumphantly up that golden *way* opened for its everlasting march by the almighty will. Rev. C. B. W. Gordon considered one month and then responded, accepting the call to the First Baptist Church, of Petersburg, Va. Awful and weighty are the incumbrances upon the minister who goes in and out before this people, A church one hundred and fourteen years travel towards Zion, with upwards of four thousand members to be looked after, is no child's play, and the servant who undertakes such responsibilities must truly possess more zeal and Christian courage than is ordinarily met with among us. To guide this host of Israelites through the dark and thorny desert, to pilot this large ship of Zion through the fiery trials and tempestuous waves of this sin-cursed world, is a great test of religious manhood. Surrounded, as he who preaches to this people is, with every temptation that earth affords, one must be pure gold to stand the test of fire—that overcomes temptations, that controls his passions, and must preach the gospel without mixture or error. He must be able to preach the gospel in its purity and with marked intelligence. Truly, to successfully lead this people, one must be more than the average preacher, and more than the average Christian.

In the morning congregations of this church, the

cream of the literary men and women of the city, and the most expert critics and skeptics, make up the majority of visitors. To properly benefit this class of persons, the preacher must certainly be an intelligent man—acquainted with all the various doctrines and isms of infidelity, and how to handle them with convincing scriptural arguments, capable of counteracting them and captivating the reasoning faculties of such persons, before these baneful isms shall have deranged their souls beyond the hope of recovery. To speak without a figure, the preacher must be able to present the plan of salvation to such men philosophically, logically and irrefutably, or such people are not benefitted, and for the lack of which, many poor souls are lead captive by satan to the gulf of misery, from whence no traveler returns.

If to meet this class of people was the only special requisite, the preacher might have an easier task ; but this is not the case. At night there is a large outpour of such of our race as are compelled to labor or are in service in private families. The majority of these require plain preaching put to them, unlike that of the morning congregation ; hence his congregation is made up of two distinct qualities of people, combining every stage of human society, every profession, vocation, as well as every ism and cism among men. To be pastor of this church, therefore, is to be a man such as we rarely stumble upon.

From the day Rev. C. B. W. Gordon took charge

of this church it has flourished. His first sermon was from Matthew 28th chapter, and 20th verse, using as a text these words: "I am with you always, even to the end of the world;" the subject was "The Redeemer's Promise." He handled his subject ably and eloquently, making three grand points.

1. He noticed the sanctity of the promise, referring to many proof-texts and comparisons.
2. He showed the authenticity of this promise.
3. The comfort this divine promise affords.

In this sermon Rev. C. B. W. Gordon did great credit to himself and elicited many complimentary remarks from all the papers published in the city. His preaching was filled with wisdom, pithy oxism, and abounded with philosophy and practical life.

Since he has been pastor of this church he has created and put in motion a healthy stream of morals, that is as clear of spots and as untarnished as the shining rays of sunlight.

Although the flower of youth has barely shed its bloom, he nevertheless carries in his every day walk an undaunted solemnity that tells the world that his mission is to cry "Behold the Lamb." There is a silent preaching in his every day or daily deportment that constrains men and women to say, "surely he is a man of God." The sinful pride so common among ministers, and most especially those who hold good charges, has no resting place in his bosom. Yet he has a high appreciative self-respect and encourages the same in the pulpit. Besides being logical and philosophical, his preaching is di-

rect. He has a certain Christian aim in view, seemingly distinctively fixed in his mind. He then lifts his voice and fires directly at his purpose. Sometimes his aim seems to be to preach a Christian doctrinal sermon, to magnify a Christian virtue, to glorify a Christian character, to interpret an obscure scripture, to secure the performance of a certain duty—say, for instance, building or repairing the house of worship, or any other Christian duty that demands his immediate efforts. Like a gospel marksman he fires right into the world and brings home game at every discharge. There is no cracking away at random with him; it is straight shooting every pop, and never fails to enter the heart with the piercing arrow of the Holy Ghost. His preaching has not a commanding, but a persuasive air; that is, it does not force but wins, does not drive but leads men to God and to the performance of their Christian duties.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS ABILITY AS A MODERATOR.

Probably there is no qualification of ministers more important among the African churches than this. Church government almost entirely depends upon the minister's disciplinary management. Where every member is allowed the same authority as another, some one will try to carry that authority too far, and general disorder will naturally result; and if the moderator is either lacking in knowledge or

manhood, it is a hard drag. But in C. B. W. Gordon is combined both knowledge and spinality. His is a level-headed, firm and unshaken mode of ruling, with an essence of serenity and calmness that oils the wheels of his church business, and makes everything go sweet and harmonious. On being asked by the writer, one of the oldest church officials of Petersburg (Deacon Spencer Green) said that, "Rev. C. B. W. Gordon was the best moderator he ever saw." There is no dodging the question in him; his ruling is like his preaching, scriptural and direct, knowing no man. The only question with him is the facts and the law, with these he condemns or clears. Amidst the wildest struggles of excitement he is still undismayed and self-possessed, and when his meetings begin to drift off from the Christian landmark, he detects it in a moment, and applies a wise remedy; hence good order, felicity and joy is the result.

CHAPTER X.

GORDON'S BUILDING QUALITIES.

Rev. C. B. W. Gordon, as we have elsewhere said, is not only an orator, but he has other endowments equally as valuable as the oratorical endowment. When he came to this church he found it not as he thought it ought to be in many respects, most especially the building. He therefore commenced to preach a series of direct sermons, striking every lick at a direct object. He knew that in

order to affect any change in the building, he must affect the people. They had to be stirred to the heart before the work could begin. To do this required two grand things, viz., to prepare and bring before them a sound reason for all they were required to aid in doing. 2nd. To show the ways and means of doing it—that is, the people must be made to see the need of money, and then instructed as to the best way to raise it, without making a drag or waterhall, and besides, they must be reached through the minister in a wise and effectual manner. He therefore made an estimate of the work and the amount of money to be raised, and began to preach directly at that point with all the power he could summon. There was no beating about the bush, or boyish play about it; it was business, direct, positive and efficient. He soon made his congregation feel as he did, and the work was immediately begun. He planned the whole remodeling of his church within a short while, then he called his official members together and presented his plans, and like men of God they went united into the work. It was no child's sport to plan the different improvements made on the building, and yet to plan is easier than to carry into execution. All of this vast business rushed upon him and demanded a portion of his thoughts, while his membership is very large and himself constantly called out to officiate, either at some wedding or burial. Thus to properly estimate the building qualities of Rev. C. B. W. Gordon is more than a task for the writer.

Let the reader pay a visit to this splendid building, and they will be struck with wonder and amazement at the various improvements and additions on the church edifice; all planned and managed by himself. He is endowed with powerful building capacity. He is not satisfied with a mere makeshift, but he, like Solomon, wishes the house of the Lord to look fully as well as the house of satan. He desires to see the house of the Prince of Peace look like the house of a prince, and not like the house of a pauper. Then, on the other hand, he is not one of those whose aspirations swell beyond the possibilities of his effort, as do some of our ministers, but they are quite up to them. The whole work of his remodeling is full of harmony. Every mortise seems to have been pre-calculated by him, and when put in its designated place it brings both comfort and harmony. There is no blank squares in his building—all is complete. Its manner of arrangement and execution is in itself a wide field of labor for one mind, exclusive of everything else, yet it seems to be the very thing for Gordon. Indeed, he has such a progressive mind that we are at a loss to conjecture how he will content himself when his church is completed and he has no building in operation. He seems to delight himself in seeing men work upon a house for God. Somehow he appears to think that there is no real good in a church unless that church is at work. "Work earnest and work ever," is his motto. It is a pity for us that every church has not a Gordon. Men too often find a church in an unfinished

condition, allow it to remain so for years, and pocket every cent they can possibly raise, which, thank God, is very little, stay there as long as they can, or until they chance to be called to some other field, then they go off and leave the church just as they found it, except he leaves either a drained congregation, discouraged by paying a heavy salary and seeing no benefits, or a frozen church, as cold as an iceberg, which the best minister this side of the north frigid zone can hardly warm, though he calls down fire from above.



HISTORY OF THE CHURCH,

FROM 1756 TO 1885.

THE first organization was in Prince George county, under the pastorate of Elder John Benn. The first membership came from Prince George, Charles City and Bluestone, and were known as New Lights. In 1756 Elders Wm. Murphy, Phillips and Mackey preached to the scattered members of New Lights. In 1758 or '59 arrangements were made to organize the three into a church on the farm of Col. Byrd, but various difficulties intervened, and they remained scattered until one hundred years ago, when the Rev. John Michaels collected them together and formed a regular Baptist church on the estate of Col. Byrd, on James river, and the following colored ministers were ordained: Aaron Gardiner, Moses Gardiner, Benjamin Gardiner, Thomas Gardiner and Benjamin Farrell.

After the burning of the quarters on Col. Byrd's estate, this church came to this city and built their house of worship on Harrison



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HARRISON STREET.

*Foundation 115 x 75 Feet. Seating Capacity, 2,500; with
Camp Chairs, 3,000.*

street, near where the church now stands. Elder John Benn was the pastor here. This house was burned, and the congregation moved to Oak street, where Oaks Warehouse now stands. Elder Benn died while the church worshipped at this place. After his death Elder Daniel Jackson took charge of the congregation. About this time Mr. Robert Bolling, father of Cols. George and Robert Bolling, sold them, for a nominal sum, the lot on Harrison street, where the old house once stood, facing Maple Lane. Elder Jackson discharged all the duties of a pastor until after Nat Turner's insurrection, when the law was changed so as to have a white person present at all church meetings.

In 1842 the church had a great revival, and a great many were Baptized. At this time the church was under the charge of Rev. Mr. Gwaltney, who served both this and Gilfield church. In 1847 the old house was dedicated, the sermon being preached by the Rev. Mr. Jennett. In 1848 there was another large increase in the membership of the church. In 1849 Elder Jackson had become too feeble, and Elder R. N. Lee, (white) was called to the pastorate of the church. He remained one year, and in 1858 the Rev. John Butler, (white) took charge of the church. In 1860 six hundred joined the church. The old church being too small, the lot where the present church stands was secured, and a house was built at the cost of \$11,000. In 1863 this house was dedicated, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. Thomas Hume. Rev. Mr. Butler left in 1865, at

which time the church had a membership of 1,700 members. Rev. Harrison Scott was then called, and after him Elder John H. Gaines. In 1866 the house was burned, but the leading white citizens of the town at once subscribed the sum of \$3,000 to rebuild it, single individuals among our white citizens giving as much as \$500 each.

In 1869 the work of building the present house was commenced. In 1870 the house was sufficiently advanced to worship in. Rev. P. T. Smith was pastor for 18 months. Rev. J. A. Black, of Norfolk, Va., was called in 1873, and served until his death, in 1883. Rev. C. B. W. Gordon was called in 1884, the tenth pastor of this church since its organization, and seven houses of worship have been used by them.

CHAPTER XII.

PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE CHARGE OF GORDON.

Since Rev. C. B. W. Gordon was installed pastor of this church, it has been in the most prosperous condition. The church had undergone very much conflict before Rev. Mr. Gordon took charge. Their pastor had died, and they were a long while without a shepherd. They prayed the Lord to send them a good minister. (More than once had this church been stabbed to her very vitals by bad preachers.) She having lost one—Rev. Mr. Black—in whom she had the highest confidence, and under whose leader-

ship the church had been more prosperous than at any period since its organization. The church was now at a stand-still. Their devout deacons, upon whom so much depends, cheered the fainting lambs by constantly assuring them that God, in his own appointed time, would send them a pastor. Different ministers passed and preached to this congregation—not a few in number. In this way the church had a fine opportunity to select a suitable pastor. Finally, in January, 1884, the whole church seemed to centre on Rev. C. B. W. Gordon, who had visited the city but once, then by special invitation. A great revival of religion immediately ensued, and many souls were converted to God and added to the church—five hundred in number. The congregation in itself seemed revived and enlivened. There has been a thorough remodeling of the building since Rev. C. B. W. Gordon has been pastor; there is under execution at present on the church, work to the amount of \$10,000. When it is completed, which it soon will be, it will be one of the finest and most commodious church edifices in the South.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REMODELING OF THE CHURCH.

This remodeling is the grandest in the South. It makes the church look as if it was built entirely new. All the slating has been taken off and new slating put on, and the steeple newly slated, making it the

grandest and most lofty in the city. The windows have all been taken out and fine stained glass windows put in. The up-stairs arrangements are unsurpassed by any we have ever seen. The pews are in the finest style, made with doors and cushions. The gallery is made swinging, and yet on posts, with fine iron railings. The pulpit suit is the latest and finest style in this country, (New England pulpit suit), costing \$200 or \$300. It is on the order of the altar mentioned by the Revelator—the seven golden candle-sticks. It is simply magnificent. The pool is another new arrangement; it has every convenience that could possibly be had. It is entered by two doors—one from each way. Through these doors the candidates enter and are baptized, and return, the ladies to one room in the building and the gentlemen to the other. The pool has two pipes connected with it for the purpose of receiving and discharging the water. There has been made an addition to the church of a class-room, pastor's study, &c. This class-room is to afford instruction to the young men of this congregation who wish to take a course in theology, and are not prepared to attend theological schools. These classes are taught by Rev. C. B. W. Gordon. There is no small number of young men in this church who avail themselves of this opportunity. On the bottom floor there is a deacons' room, a trustees' room and general hall-way, where parties entering the church from the rear may stop and pull off their rubbers, &c., besides they have a large and commodious

room, known as the basement or lecture room, in which the Sunday school meets, and in which they hold prayer meetings, &c. This room will seat about 2,000 people comfortably. Along the sides of the walls, on the outside of the edifice, are two air walls, four feet from the house. In front of this church stands three fine lamps, throwing a brilliant light into the entire church yard. The church is enclosed by an iron fence on stone curbing, with three gates. The steps of the basement are nice and durable stone, while the steps on the outside leading up stairs are iron. On ascending the steps outside, you enter a large vestibule, admitting people from three doors, and leading through a common way or single door into the church, or still ascending another stairway into an upper vestibule and entering into the gallery.

Every department of this church is lighted with gas, and the floor well carpeted with fine brussel carpeting. This church, when finished, will have cost for its construction \$50,000, and will be, without doubt, the most handsome church in the South. There are various other improvements that space in this little volume compels us to decline mentioning. This edifice reflects great credit on the congregation. Her towering walls and tall steeple attracts marked attention from all who pass, walking or driving, in this portion of the city. This church stands facing Harrison street, overlooking the Central Park. It is said to be the best located church in the city.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONGREGATION.

The congregation of this church combines every vocation and profession among men. They are liberal in their contributions, cheerful in meetings, and second to none in deportment; prompt in attendance and hospitable in caring for each other's welfare. The members are very obedient in church council, which, I am sorry to say, is very rare among us. Taken as a whole, they display a marked degree of intelligence and moral suasion.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

DEACON SPENCER GREEN, SUPERINTENDENT.

This school was established immediately after the Emancipation, by Spencer Green, who has ever since stood at the helm and piloted the heaven-bound ship Zionward. No branch of God's Zion has been more prosperous than this school. *Glorious work!* Too much cannot be said of it. It has served as the nursery of the church, from which scores of young plants have been transplanted in the Church of Christ. It has grown steadily year by year, under the leadership of this faithful servant of the Master, multiplying her hands a thousand fold. Shaken by many a wind and rifted by many a thunderbolt, she still has her vast flock of lambs on the way to Canaan. Through heat and cold, through sunshine and showers, this flock of God's workers crowds the church doors every Sunday, and in due time their sweet voices are heard

to break the stillness of the air. From this school workers have gone to every nook and corner of the city on missions for the fallen ones. Blandford and Old street schools are branches of this school.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHOIR—MR. J. M. LEIGH, CHORISTER.

This church has a choir unsurpassed by any we have ever heard. They practice altogether vocal music, and is composed of the finest musical talent of the city. Many of its members have been singing for years. The melodious singing this choir so timely and so promptly renders, adds a charm to the services. It lifts the souls of the hearers upward with a bewitching charm and carries, on every passing reflection, the very essence of a happy heart. One cannot over estimate the value of these harmonious pilgrims. The raptuous chanting of this choir soothes the sighing heart, stirs the very soul to its bottom and carries the imagination upon the wing of the morning to that world of songs.

“Sing on your heavenly way,
Ye ransomed sinners sing.”

Below we give the list of members of

THE CHOIR.

E. J. Leigh, <i>Leader.</i>	Mrs. Rebecca Randal,
Wm. Burch, <i>Assistant.</i>	Mrs. Ida Tatum,
E. R. Butler,	Mrs. Lucy A. Johnson,

John R. Hammond,	Mrs. Sarah Montague,
John H. Marks,	Mrs. Sarah Jones,
Wyatt Parham,	Mrs. Mary Jones,
J. E. Crowder,	Mrs. Henrietta Evans,
Willie Nelson,	Mrs. Elizabeth Mackray,
Taylor Pride,	Miss Elizabeth Pretty,
Peter Montague,	Miss Lurenar Crier,
Frank J. Montague,	Miss Elinora Johnson,
Harac Harrison,	Miss F. V. Clayton,
Geo. W. Thweat,	Mrs. Martha Thomas.
Layton Pride.	

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD STREET MISSION SCHOOL, MR. W. H. PUGH,
SUPERINTENDENT.

This school was established in 1874, by Deacon Spencer Green, (the great Sunday school appostle.) It was located in a portion of the city where a school was very much needed, but it made slow progress as do most missionary enterprises. The seed of religion and Christianity is not of a hasty growth, but as we have elsewhere said, it must have time to root itself deep into the earth, then it will spring up, bearing some fifty and some a hundred fold. Many earnest efforts have been put forth to make this school a success, which efforts now begin to dawn into a bright and most encouraging prospect. In February of the present year, Rev. A. B. Callis, of Baltimore, Md., graduate of Wayland Seminary, arrived in this city, and commenced to labor with

this people. In a short time he had moved the school from Old street up to the head of High street, where they purchased a fine location, and have commenced to build a chapel that will seat upwards of four hundred people. Rev. Mr. Callis is an intelligent, working Christian gentleman, and under his influence the Sunday school has greatly increased. We are informed that they have organized a church from the influence of this school, under the leadership of Rev. Mr. Callis. He has conducted a very successful revival meeting with happy results, at this point. We therefore conjecture that within a short time another daughter of the old mother will lift her young arms among the tall steeples of Christian churches that now pierce through the dense fog.

Weary souls fresh courage take,
'Tis but a little while,
Before your Master, for your sake,
Will usher from the sky,
To summons all his workers home,
To reap their long-sought rest,
And set with Him upon His throne,
With the redeemed and blest.

There hangs upon the golden gates
Your crowns all decked with stars.
And robes, white robes, for you awaits,
And rest from toil and cares.
Then let thy labors comfort thee,
And push the battle on ;
Eternal life thy reward shall be,
For what thy hands hath done.

CHAPTER XVII.

BLANDFORD MISSION SCHOOL, DR. H. L. HARRIS,
SUPERINTENDENT.

This school was established in 1874, by Deacon Spencer Green, but made slow progress until 1884, when Dr. H. L. Harris was appointed superintendent, from which period the school has been on a grand progress. She now numbers 200 pupils and 10 teachers. She has purchased a beautiful lot and built a very comfortable house, and nearly all she does is on a cash basis. The house is now ready for plastering, and we are informed that it will soon be plastered, which will make it a neat and lovely little edifice 27 by 42 feet. It is built with a two-fold view and answers well two purposes, viz., one for the Sunday school and the other for preaching. This building is located in a portion of the city where a great many members of both Harrison Street or First Baptist and Gilfield Churches live, and not a few in number are unable to reach their churches often; they therefore attend preaching here and have their spiritual strength renewed; besides it answers many inconveniences for funeral services. Parties who cannot reach the church with their relatives, have their funerals preached at this house. The Blandford Mission is of great importance to more than a few members of the several churches of the city. This school has a fine corps of teachers whose whole hearts seem to be in the Sunday school work. They use the International lesson

papers, which are of the greatest advantage to Sunday schools. Their Sunday school, although young and small, is conducted on the most improved methods, and is attended with much interest by the best people of this portion of the city. This little mission school is doing a great work in the furtherance of the cause of Christ, and should receive the hearty applause of all the churches of the city. It is destined to be the means of reclaiming many wayward children who otherwise would wander far off on the mountain of sin. We bid her God speed in her glorious work.

Toil on, ye soldiers of the cross,
Your reward comes sure and soon;
Rescue the wandering children lost,
Reclaim the fallen ones.

God watches all your efforts here,
And sums up all you do;
Records each cross for Him you bear,
Each sinner you rescue.

He knows what all your efforts are,
Each word for Him you say;
He for each song, each tear, each prayer,
Has promised richest pay.

In that fair land of corn and wine
Your souls shall find sweet rest;
Your crown with many stars shall shine,
Your souls forever blest.

Then gird the glorious armour on,
Consecrate your heart, your mind,
To saving Adam-fallen sons,
Their Saviour help them find.

No pen portrays the happy scene,
When God shall call you home,
And on that plain, forever green,
Your happy souls will roam.

 CHAPTER XVIII.

MISSIONARY WORK.

This church has a foreign missionary society, Mr. Wm. J. Mitchel, Pres't, W. H. Majors Sec., which is doing a good work in the missionary cause. The actual money raised and expended by this body is not known to us, but we conjecture that it has, and is still raising funds to help carry the gospel to the heathen across the ocean, who bow down to wood and stone. This is one of the prime points in the history of the Missionary Baptist Denomination, and it is so called for its great missionary spirit, and as long as there remains a soul in darkness, this spark of religious philanthropy will burn in the souls of true Baptists.

“Waft, waft, ye winds the story,
 And you, ye waters roll ;
 Till like a sea of glory,
 It spreads from pole to pole.

Till o'er our ransomed nature.
 The lamb for sinners slain ;
 Redeemer, King, Creator,
 In bliss returns to reign,”

 CHAPTER XIX.

CLUBS AND AMOUNTS RAISED BY THEM.

Below we give a list of those who headed clubs and worked. And the amounts opposite their names is what each club raised, with the exception of a few personal donations and organizations. Each giver

is represented through the head of his club, and when he sees the amount opposite his leaders' name he may regard it as the part he contributed or aided in raising. It would be a source of pleasure to us if we could note each individual giver, but neither space or accuracy will permit. Should we fail to do justice to any of our cheerful givers or earnest workers, we assure them that it is not intentionally done, and is an error of the hand and not of the heart. While each earnest worker will find opposite his or her name the amount raised by him or her, and for which they have the honor, yet those who gave to them share that honor though their names do not appear in print. Meantime, those who did nothing cannot expect any honor, and indeed, they deserve none. In heaven alone will the earnest worker be duly rewarded for his labors. There every figure is correct and stands at its full value.

Mary Thompson,	\$23	27
Lucy A. Fisher,	6	25
S. Watkins,	6	30
Pinky Jones,	5	60
Eliza Brady,	5	50
Virginia A. Lanier and Mary J. Butts, .	31	10
G. A. Watkins and H. Harrison, . . .	12	50
Virginia Moore and Rosa Coleman, . .	4	15
Katie Butts,	30	36
Eliza James,	23	50
Thomas Hamlin,	6	00
The Sabbath school,	50	00

Young Men's Christian Association, No. 1, S. Watkins, president, . . .	14 50
Young Men's Christian Association, No. 2,	10 00
Rebecca Randólph,	22 50
Sisters Harris and Butts,	25 54
Martha Johnson,	16 60
Nancy Mings,	7 05
Sisters Jackson and Davis,	7 60
Sisters Epps and Christian,	4 00
Rosa Archer,	6 00
Tent Sisters, through Sister Virginia Wilkins,	37 36
Deacon Spencer Green,	116 45
Richard Cosby,	95 82
Armistead Green,	239 23
R. H. Cooley,	38 88
H. Matthews,	24 55
Mary Jane Bates,	66 66
J. G. Harris,	62 31
Francis Taylor,	71 05
Amanda Brown,	71 05
Lucy Coleman,	25 72
Mary D. Green,	8 50
Hattie White,	3 69
Isabella Robertson,	4 82
E. J. Wilson,	8 50
Emma J. King,	9 45
Ella Davis,	8 65
Ellen Jackson,	14 70
E. Jackson and sisters,	15 00

Sarah Garrett,	31 15
Charles Johnson,	27 81
Rebecca Lewis,	70 73
Sarah Davis,	30 00

CHAPTER XX.

ELDER GORDON'S CLUB.

We give below a list of those who subscribed to Elder Gordon's list. This list is composed chiefly of such parties as were members of other clubs of workers, and this shows double effort on their part. Some of them headed other clubs and yet subscribed and paid to Elder Gordon's club. What working members! The energy of these members is not surpassed in history. This list was not intended to be put in print, but it chanced to fall into the hands of the writer, and as a matter of justice to the faithful workers, we decided to publish it. We have endeavored to give each subscriber due credit for his effort to complete the temple of the Lord. Should any mistake occur, we most sincerely regret it.

C. B. W. Gordon,	\$5 00	Mornin Bolden,	3 00
Alfred Foster,	3 00	Fannie Smith,	1 00
Jessie White,	2 00	Ephriam Fisher,	3 00
Emma Chavers,	1 00	R. C. Bradley,	2 00
David Epps and Wife,	3 00	Sophia Watson,	1 00
Mary Epps,	3 00	Mary Watson,	3 00
Sarah Epps,	3 00	J. H. Parham,	3 00
Maria Swans,	3 00	Ann Jackson,	1 00

W. J. Smith,	4 00	Jane Gaines,	1 00
J. W. Smith,	2 00	Phillis Wright,	1 00
Mary Mabry,	1 00	C. Hill,	1 00
William Brown,	1 00	Willie Knox,	1 00
Chester Swans,	1 00	Rosa Harrison,	1 00
Sarah Valentine,	3 00	M. J. Leigh,	1 00
Maria Clifton,	2 00	Lewis Robertson,	2 50
Lucinda Bates,	1 00	Abram Banks,	1 00
Susan Montague,	1 00	George Vaughan,	4 00
Diamond Elliott,	1 00	Francis Pryor,	1 00
William E. Carter,	2 50	Isham Pryor,	1 00
Thomas Miles,	3 00	Henry Fox,	2 00
J. P. Fisher,	1 00	Rebecca Randolph,	2 00
Sarah Vaughan,	1 50	Thomas Freeman,	2 00
Louisa Green,	1 00	L. E. Jones,	2 25
Robert Tucker,	1 00	Reuben Randolph,	1 00
S. Jones,	1 00	Walter John,	1 00
H. Leigh,	1 00	Bettie Cooley,	1 00
M. Leigh,	2 00	J. A. Parham,	1 50
Ella Harris,	2 00	C. Smith,	1 00
Violet Miles,	2 00	J. W. Cruse,	1 00
William Harris,	1 00	Samuel Parham,	1 00
Mary Robertson,	1 00	Frank Montague,	2 50
James Thweat,	1 00	W. J. Scott,	1 00
H. Matthews,	2 00	Mary Gardiner,	1 00
Thomas Randolph,	1 00	G. T. Bradley,	1 00
Lucy Jones,	2 75	W. H. Major,	1 00
Anna F. Parker,	2 00	Mary J. Green,	2 00
Amanda Taylor,	3 00	A. M. Roberson,	1 00
Mary Harris,	1 00	Cora Puter,	1 00
Rosa Brown,	1 00	Henry Jones,	1 00
J. T. Coleman,	2 00	Mary Brown,	1 00
Agnes Harrison,	1 00	John Gholston,	4 00
John Miles,	1 00	William Allison,	1 00
Abraham Pankins,	2 00	Josephine Short,	1 00
Amos Jones,	1 00	Louisa Pryor,	1 00
Susan Purdy,	2 00	L. Cary,	1 00
Ida Lewis,	2 00	M. J. Charity,	1 00
Lucy Lewis,	1 00	Virginia Davis,	1 50
R. F. Taylor,	2 00	Allen Robertson,	1 00
Laura Taylor,	2 00	John Brown,	1 00
Peter Harris,	1 00	John Short,	2 00
W. F. Mason,	2 00	Nancy Henrett,	1 00

Jennie Coleman,	1 00	L. Jenkins,	1 00
G. W. Threatt,	1 00	Emma Bonner,	1 00
Eliza Jones,	3 00	Henry May,	1 50
Lucy Parham,	1 00	S. Bass,	1 00
R. Henley,	1 00	Bettie Lacy,	1 00
Mary Fowler,	2 00	John Parham,	2 00
Rachel Parker,	2 00	Wm. Thomas,	2 00
Dollie Turner,	1 00	Ida Marshall,	1 00
Taron Todd,	1 00	Harriet Peet,	1 00
J. A. Garret,	2 00	Carolina Burgess,	1 00
Wm. A. Morn,	1 00	Lucy A. Brown,	1 00
Vinnie Auters,	3 00	Antinett Mallory,	5 00
Kate Robinson,	1 00	William Mason,	1 00
Catherine Anderson,	1 00	E. Banks,	1 00
Lucy Coleman,	2 00	Christia Moss,	1 00
Sarah Carrington,	2 00	Clover Gilliam,	1 00
W. A. Jones,	1 00	L. A. Harris,	1 00
J. Y. Harris,	4 00	Louisa Crier,	1 00
Bettie Jones,	1 00	C. L. Todd,	1 00
Ann Hatchett,	2 00	Emeline Brown,	1 00
Julia Mason,	2 00	Oscar Zilks,	4 00
Mary Roper,	1 00	George Matthews,	2 00
Victoria A. Hennis,	2 00	Polly Green,	1 00
Ann Bell,	2 00	Spencer Green,	2 00
Louisa Smith,	2 00	Charles Green,	1 00
Robert Owens,	1 00	Julia Fields,	2 50
Rosa Bannon,	1 00	Charlotte Fields,	1 00
Lucy Jackson,	2 00	Isham Watkins,	1 00
W. A. Penn,	1 00	G. W. King,	4 00
Emma J. King,	1 00	Catherine Leigh,	1 50
Nancy Minge,	2 00	Sarah Cole,	2 00
Ann Miles,	1 00	John Moss,	1 00
James Parham,	1 00	C. Gilbert,	1 00
Susan Parham,	1 00	Laura Harris,	1 00
A. Parker,	2 00	Mary Height,	1 00
Jane Garner,	1 00	Lizzie Jones,	1 00
J. Cross,	3 00	Dora Burgess,	1 00
Peter G. Scott,	4 00	H. J. Smith,	1 00
Lewis Green,	1 00	Edward Allison,	1 00
J. Bass,	1 00	Eliza Braxton,	1 00
R. Bass,	1 00	Nora Bannon,	1 00
Carline Woodyly,	4 00	Arthur Carter,	2 00
Elizabeth Mason,	1 00	Malinda Bolden,	1 00

T. Gilliam,	1 00	John Anderson,	1 00
Irvin Hatchett,	2 00	Catherine Hooper,	2 00
Harriet Young,	2 00	Louisa Love,	1 25
Emily Blackerson,	2 25	Dilsia A. Brown,	1 00
Thomas Warner,	1 00	Arthur Carter,	1 00
Eliza Lewis,	2 00	David Powell,	1 00
Wm. Melkins,	1 00	R. C. Bradley,	2 00
Jane Lawrence,	1 00	Lucy Scott,	1 00
Julia Bench,	1 50	Katie Pettiford,	2 00
Amanda Brown,	2 00	Julia Harrison,	1 00
Fannie Fulks,	1 00	Lucy Holmes,	1 00
Rosa Harrison,	1 00	W. H. Jones,	1 00
Wm. Allen,	1 00	Mary Pinkins,	1 00
Andrew Davis,	1 00	Dollie A. Willis,	1 00
Mrs. Andrew Davis,	1 00	J. Bonner,	1 00
Wm. Davis,	2 00	F. Morgan,	1 00
Thomas Randall,	2 00	Pattie Warden,	1 00
Lucy J. Todd,	2 00	J. Y. Harris,	4 00
Sarah Bland,	2 00	Ellen Harris,	2 00
Louisa Cryor,	1 00	H. J. Smith,	1 00
Mary Gordon,	1 00	John J. Morgan,	5 00
W. A. Grigg,	1 00	Violet Miles,	1 00
Ann Robertson,	1 00	Sarah Randall,	1 10
Henry Grover,	1 00		

CHAPTER XXI.

CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH.

ARTICLE I.

Section 1. We adopt the Bible with reverence and thankfulness, believe all that it teaches, and obey all its commands. John—5, 39; Romans—15, 4; Hebrews—2, 1 and 25.

We adopt the Bible as our faith, rule and practice for the government of this church.

ARTICLE II.

Section 1. The government of this church shall be by the male members, fifteen of which shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 2. We agree to have our regular church meetings for the transaction of business the 2nd and 4th Monday in each month, and at such meetings there shall be a Moderator and Clerk.

Section 3. The duty of the moderator is to direct the general proceedings, so as to secure the object contemplated.

Section 4. When the Moderator has taken his seat silence shall prevail. He shall state all motions and put them to a vote and announce the result.

Section 5. The Moderator shall decide all points of order, and in case of a tie he shall have the casting vote.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to make and keep a fair record of the proceedings of each meeting from time to time, and furnish any information the records contain, and shall have charge of all papers and documents belonging to the church.

ARTICLE III.

Section 1. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and adopting the views of faith and practice held by this church, as set forth in the foregoing declaration, may, upon being Baptized, be received into its membership.

Section 2. Members from other churches holding the same faith may be received by letters of recommendation or dismissal from their respective churches.

Section 3. Those who have once been members of Baptist churches, and in consequence of Peculiar circumstances have no letter of dismissal, may be received by giving satisfactory evidence of a change of heart, Christian conduct and scriptural faith.

Section 4. Persons excluded may be restored to membership on confession of their error and giving evidence of repentance.

ARTICLE IV.

Section 1. The duties of members to themselves are, the acquisition of religious knowledge and constant progress in grace. It is their duty to honor, esteem and love their pastor, to pray for him fervently, and daily to manifest a tender regard for his reputation, and contribute towards his support as God has blessed each with means.

Section 2. The ordination of Deacons shall be preceded by one year's trial; they shall continue in office as long as satisfaction shall be given.

Section 3. The Treasurer, Clerk and Sexton shall, on the second Monday in January, be annually elected by a majority of the male members present, composing the stated meetings.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all moneys and pay all orders drawn on

him by the deacons of the church, when signed by the Clerk. He shall keep a fair book of accounts, and annually, at the said meetings in January, shall lay before the church a statement of all moneys received and paid out.

Section 5. The number of ordained deacons shall not exceed seven, whose duty it shall be to see to the wants of the pastor, the sick and poor of the church and assist in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE V.

Section 1. The pastor of the church (or in his absence any brother the church may appoint) shall act as Moderator in all meetings for the transaction of business, and he shall cause all meetings to be opened with prayer and closed with the benediction.

Section 2. He shall call for the business of the church in the following manner: 1st. Read the minutes of the previous meeting. 2nd. Hear the experience of candidates for membership. 3rd. Receive letters of dismissal from sister churches. 4th. Grant letters of dismissal to those requesting them, and satisfy the church why they want them. 5th. Hear the reports of committees and other unfinished business. 6th. New business.

Section 3. He shall suffer no seconded motion to be entertained until the one under consideration has been disposed of, except to amend, postpone, adjourn or put the main question.

Section 4. He shall call to order any brother or

member who, while speaking, introduces a subject foreign to the one under discussion.

Section 5. He shall call to order any brother or member who uses discourteous language, and the member failing to obey shall be dealt with as a disorderly member.

Section 6. Any member who wishes to speak shall rise from his seat and respectfully address the Moderator, and shall not speak more than twice nor longer than five minutes on the same subject, without the express consent of the church.

Section 7. Any member disturbing a brother while speaking, unless he depart from the subject under debate, shall be silenced during the meeting.

Section 8. Any member who, being guilty of disorderly conduct, shall be called before the church at the next regular meeting to answer the charge of being disorderly.

ARTICLE VI.

Section 1. The pastor shall be a member of the church.

ARTICLE VII.

Section 1. The church shall celebrate the Lord's Supper the Third Sunday in each and every month, unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

Section 2. No funerals, no marriages, no baptizing, shall be allowed in the church without the consent, the permission or knowledge of the pastor.

Section 3. All conversation and loud talking are

hereby strictly forbidden when doing business, by any person or persons. Persons persisting, after being called to order by the Moderator, shall be silenced during the meeting.

Section 4. Any person failing to attend divine service for three consecutive Sabbaths, will be dealt with as a disorderly member, unless sick or out of the city; and if a member having knowledge of another so living, and fail to report it to the church, he will be dealt with as a disorderly member.

Section 5. Any person proven to be guilty of slandering the pastor or his family, or injuring his reputation in any way, shall be dealt with as a disorderly member.

ARTICLE VIII.

Section 1. It shall be the duty of the deacons to make provision for seating strangers and the congregation on the Sabbath.

ARTICLE IX.

Section 1. All the deacons are requested to serve on communion, unless out of the city or confined by sickness.

ARTICLE X.

“Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”—St. Matthew 18, 15.

CHAPTER XXII.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Article 1, of the Scriptures: We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of Heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter.

Article 2, of the True God: We believe that there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is Jehovah.

Article 3, of the Fall of Man: We believe that man was created in a state of holiness and happiness under the law of his Maker.

Article 4, the Way of Salvation: We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God.

Article 5, Justification: We believe the scriptures teach that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him, is justification.

Article 6, the Freeness of Salvation: We believe the scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel.

Article 7, Regeneration: We believe the scriptures teach that in order to be saved sinners must be regenerated or born again.

Article 8, Repentance and Faith: We believe that the scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties.

Article 9, God's Purpose of Grace: We believe the scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God.

Article 10, Sanctification: We believe the scriptures teach that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness—that it is a progressive work—that it is begun in regeneration.

Article 11, Perseverance of Saints: We believe the scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure to the end.

Article 12, the Law and Gospel: We believe the scriptures teach that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government.

Article 13, a Gospel Church: We believe the scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

Article 14, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: We believe the scriptures teach that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, and it is his duty to observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

Article 15, the Christian Sabbath: We believe the scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes.

Article 16, Civil Government: We believe the scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment.

Article 17, Righteous and the Wicked: We be-

lieve the scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked.

Article 18, the World to Come: We believe the scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day Christ will descend from Heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution.

CHAPTER XXIII.

COVENANT.

As we trust we have received, through Divine Grace, the Lord Jesus Christ, and given ourselves wholly to Him, and on profession of our faith been buried with Him in Baptism, and united to His church, a precious privilege as well as duty, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, engage that we will walk together in brotherly love, exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows. That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but seek and pray for the spirituality, harmony and prosperity of the church—sustain its worship ordinances, discipline and doctrines, and give its claims a sacred pre-eminence over all organizations of human origin; that we will cheerfully contribute of our means as God has prospered us for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry

among us, for the relief of the poor and to speed the gospel over the earth.

That we will maintain private and family devotions, religiously educate our children, and endeavor, in purity of heart and newness of life and good will toward all men, to exemplify and commend our holy faith, win souls to the Saviour, and hold fast our profession till he shall come and receive us to Himself in the Heavenly mansions.

[Relying on the grace of God, do you thus covenant and promise?]

And now, the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHURCH OFFICERS.

Board of Deacons.

SPENCER GREEN,	ARMISTEAD GREEN,
RICHARD COSBY,	ROBT. H. COOLEY,
JOSEPH CROSS,	H. MATTHEWS.

Clerk,

D. J. BUTTS.

Assistant Clerk,

CHURCH HISTORY.

J. M. MYERS.

Second Assistant Clerk,
W. H. MAJOR.

Incidental Treasurer,
SPENCER GREEN.

Poor St. Treasurer,
H. MATTHEWS.

Building Treasurer,
ARMISTEAD GREEN.

Missionary Treasurer,
RICHARD COSBY.

REV. C. B. W. GORDON, Pastor.

CHAPTER XXV.

POEM DEDICATED TO THE CHURCH, BY REV. W. H.
SHERWOOD.

Thou mother of mothers, thou Christian tree,
From whose sacred covers and blessed family
A nation of God's worshippers is born,
And all over this vast continent have gone
Spreading their rich fruits of Christianity,
Proclaiming God's word and bringing men from vanity,
And pointing them to the throne.
Firm as the hills thy walls shall stand
Till rolling years the final day demand.

Archangel's trump sounding wake the dead,
Then crossing the river with a young leader at your head,
You will enter fair Canaan's land,
And join the disembodied heavenly host,
Sing praise the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Thou hast given to many churches a preacher,
 To many pulpits a Spurgeon and a Beecher ;
 Thou hast given to every trade and vocation
 An honest, upright, unfaltering Christian,
 And you still send forth all over the globe
 Strong-hearted men and workers for God.

Old, yet young, thou art mother,
 Thy locks are gray, yet thou art a child,
 Thy father christeneth thee his babe, his lover ;
 Chasteneth with his rod and rewardeth with his smiles.

Mother, thou art strong—thy strength is of the Lord,
 None can make thee weak, thou hast the word ;
 Long live thy name, long stand thy walls,
 Your children, your pastor, your deacons and all,
 Live happy, live joyous, and ever live near
 To thy father's commandment till the bridegroom appears.
 Push the battle for Zion to the heavenly gates,
 Where Christ and his angels are standing in wait.

Some of thy loved ones have gone, mother,
 To that world of spirits, perfected love,
 And are waiting and watching at the gate, mother,
 And they beckon you from the home above.
 Many a bright soldier from your camp stand,
 All robed and crowned amidst that band ;
 They whisper to thee and bid thee to come,
 But you cannot go till your work is done.

When your Chief Captain shall say to his own,
 Thy labors have ended, thy race has been won,
 Thy name is called and thou must respond,
 The ship is now ready to carry thee home.
 Sweet day, happy hour, why tarry so long ?
 Our pilgrims are eager to join in the song—
 Of Moses and the Lamb with the angelic throng.

Make hast ! oh, morning, dawn on us, oh, day !
 We long for the trumpet to call us away,
 When every church militant at Jordan shall meet,
 And all Zion travelers each other shall greet,
 And hail at the portals of that blessed world,
 With the flag of salvation and banners unfurled.

Hail, happy throng, hail, happy day,
 Before whose majesty the earth flees away ;
 What rapture, what joy the meeting will be,
 When from all creation the gathering we see,
 Some happy, some sorry, some sink to despair,
 Who can tell the wonders that flash on us there ?
 What grand associations the pilgrims will form
 With all other pilgrims before them that's gone,
 With singing and shouting in splendor they go,
 To rest from their toils and cares evermore.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DEDICATED TO DEACON SPENCER GREEN, BY REV.

W. H. SHERWOOD.

When yon sun ceases to course his way,
 Yon moon her changes stop,
 When all the stars with glittering rays,
 From every planet drop,

Thy sun shall have begun to rise
 Beyond this world of ours,
 To ra-di-ate a brighter sky,
 Where clouds will never lower.

Thy sun will rise to set no more,
 Through endless ages roll,
 Your moon no weary changes know,
 No fading colors hold.

Thy element will have a gem,
 Which to its lustre bright
 Each star is but an obit dim,
 And noonday is but night.

A few more storms must shake thy tree,
 A few more rains must beat,
 A few more sighs and bends of kneec,
 A few more combats meet,

And you shall go where storms are not,
 Where rains do not descend,
 Where sighing do not reach the spot,
 And pleasure has no end.

A few more travels to and fro,
And wandering children seek,
A few more rounds of labor go
To comfort those who weep.

And your blest feet will find a rest
Beyond the hills of time,
While on your father's peaceful breast
Your weary head reclines.

Although with age your frame decays,
As you grow old in years,
Mark after mark upon thee lays,
Of earnest toil and cares.

On yon clear river stands a tree
Whose leaves all nations heal;
Thy soul from every snare set free,
Will youthful vigor feel.

Upon it grows eternal life
For such as overcome;
There sickness, sorrow, pain and strife
And conflicts are unknown.

From that celestial world of joy,
You'll view those hills you've trod,
And see the thousand girls and boys,
That you have brought to God.

Oh! rapturous scene, oh! richest sight,
To view that happy band,
All clothed in robes of spotless white,
And marching hand in hand.

They raise an everlasting song,
That angels do not sing;
The ransomed that his blood atoned,
Redeemed by heaven's King.

Then how refined thy heart must feel,
When you remember this—
That you have led them on with zeal,
To endless joy and bliss.

You will know these children in that day,
Remembering whence they came,
And join with them in joyful lay,
Sing praise to Jesus' name.

Each struggle here shall praise thee there,
 And bring a rich reward;
 The book recorded deeds shall bear.
 That you have done for God.

Now at the beautiful golden gate,
 Are some who waits for thee,
 And to that holy, happy state,
 Your soul shall shortly be.

Methinks I hear them sweetly chime,
 Hark! what a joyful sound!
 In Eden's fair, serener clime,
 Ten thousand joys are found.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONCLUSION.

Many ministers in our race hold very important charges, and have held them for years, who do not merit a mention in history and whose labors have not resulted in a single good, apart from the fact that they entertain the people and keep them together until a working minister comes—until a man who is progressive comes. Not a man whose highest object is money and appointment. Very often sinners are heard to say that religion is a humbug, and not unfrequently they denounce ministers as being nothing more than money-seekers, which imprudents we do not attempt to justify, yet ministers, to a very great extent, are responsible for it. They so conduct themselves and the affairs of the church that they invite criticism, and bring scandal and reproach upon the church and the Christian religion.

A minister must be progressive. To him, more than any other, the people naturally look, as a leader. If he is dull and inactive it is very natural that the church will be slow and inaggressive, and if it moves at all is more than apt to retrograde. We live now in the midst of a moving age, and we cannot afford to stand still. We must either build up or get out of the way. Drive on, or get off the track and let some one come who will drive. "Work while you work and play while you play." Men of God must be vigilant, zealous, watchful and active, of which Rev. C. B. W. Gordon is a model and a pattern.

We cannot close this book without saying a few words about the Young Men's Christian Association. This church has among its membership two Young Men's Christian Associations. Both these associations are doing a good and glorious work. They have some of the most soul-ennobling and genuine spirit-seeking meetings. Its members seem to be filled with the Holy Ghost when they enter the hall, and it is not long thereafter before they warm the entire room. These associations—No. 1, Scipio Watkins, President, and No. 2, S. Wilson, President, give liberally to all benevolent institutions, to the church most especially, and form one of the strongest agencies in christianizing the world. These beacon lights of Christian effulgence shine up all the dark places of the city, from centre to circumference. They sometimes convene in the centre of the city and sometimes in other nooks and corners, thus throwing the inspir-

ing light of the gospel into all the dark places, and lighting up their dreary pathways with that light which shineth in darkness. Truly the prophet "saw a wheel within a wheel."

How wondrous are thy works, oh Lord,
 And how surpassing wondrous they
 Who set their temples in thy word,
 To do thy works and show thy ways?

What means these sacrifices here,
 That thy own people make and bear?
 Why are these constant, fervent prayers,
 These arduous labors, toils and cares?

Why cease they not nor stop to rest,
 But constantly engage with fears?
 They more than interest manifest
 By mingling tears with other tears.

Brethren, lift thy banner high,
 And all the hosts of hell defy;
 Give every moment all it claims
 Of earnest toils in Jesus' name.

High up beyond the scenes of earth,
 Where stand the perfect men of God,
 Reward for all your labor's worth,
 The laurels that succeed the sword.

Crowns such as monarchs do not ware,
 That shine throughout eternity;
 One that on earth no crown can bear
 A mark of simi-lari-ty.

Stand up for God, unsheath thy sword,
 And be ye faithful unto death,
 Go down to Jordan's swelling flood
 With joy you'll enter peaceful rest.

It is but true that on thy way,
 Your souls have many a conflict met;
 Often discouraged, oft' dismayed,
 And sin and satan have beset.

Thy pathway lies through sin and scenes,
Encountering many ups and downs,
One day an ever-living green
Will spread its lovely plains around.

Clouds that once lowered o'er thy head
And threatened thee with sudden gloom,
No more be feared, no more they dread,
No more to drive thee to thy home.

But fairer lands than any isles
That this dark world of ours contains,
Where peace and plenty ever smiles,
And peace and joy eternal reigns.

It may not be out of place to say just here that the sisters have organized a club known as the "Carpet Sisters." In this way they are carpeting their church. These noble sisters deserve honorable mention. Also, the young men of the church have organized to cushion the seats, which will cost three or four hundred dollars. This church has an unsurpassed, energetic membership. Both male and female members of this church are working Christians.

Just before we close our history we have the chance to give the readers of this book the advantage of the sermon preached by Rev. C. B. W. Gordon, which was the closing sermon of the Virginia Baptist State Convention, on Sunday night, May 17th, 1885, in Bute Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va. At the hour appointed the house was packed to its uttermost capacity. After singing and prayer, a young man about six feet in height, slender in

form, with large colossal head, and rather wasted face, whose massive head of hair, jet black in color and curling in appearance, waving when parted in a heavy bluff to the right, his skin rather dark brown, with brilliant eyes, adjusting an ordinary nose, a well proportioned mouth rather smiling in appearance, small chin tapering to a cone at the bottom, and long neck centering two squarely set shoulders, displaying a combination of Indian and African features grand and attractive, rose up and read his text and began to preach.

SERMON.

SUBJECT—THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT.

"I am the Light of the World."—*John 8:12.*

Light is represented in the scriptures as the immediate result and offspring of a divine command. In the first verse of the Bible the act of creation is frankly declared. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Here we learn that the earth was without form and void; here watery chaos had a duration with an unbroken gloom of darkness. We have no history of there being further movements made by the Creator until He called forth light. When He said "Let there be light," at once light broke over the face of chaos and the floating vapors were penetrated by its splendor and brightness to their surface. Sound may be defined as any effect on the sense of hearing, and in the same way light may be defined as any effect on the

sense of sight. Sound may be defined as terms of motion of air into the cavity of the external ear, mechanically effecting the tympanium. So light may be defined by the mechanical effect produced upon the extension of the optic nerve, which forms the sensitive service of the retina. From 350 B. C. to the present age, the science of light has been studied with intense interest by the best minds of the known world, and it is quite remarkable, under the existing circumstances, to learn how slowly men have advanced in its most simple facts. By diligent search and constant experience they have only been enabled to say that light moves in a straight line, *i. e.* we see an object in the direction in which it really lies. Aristotle asked the question, "Why can we not see in the dark?" but the interrogation died without an answer. In the first century of our era Cleomedes painted out how a coin at the bottom of an empty cup, where the eye cannot see it, can be made visible by filling the cup with water, and he showed in a similar manner how the air may render the sun visible to us, while it is still under the horizon. Shortly after this date Ptolmy, the celebrated astronomer, published his book on optics and brought to light many new discoveries, but after all that has been said, done or known, man only "sees through a glass darkly." The creation of light is the grandest feature of the created world, and without it the act of creation would be incomplete. The world was in gross darkness until God said "Let there be light;" then were called forth out of a state of burning

mixture plains, islands and continents; thus light became the first distinguishing act of creation. Whether this light was universal we cannot tell, but God soon created two lights which he placed in the firmament of heaven—the greater to rule the day and the lesser to rule the night. Whatever opinion may be entertained as to the facility with which these two separate acts may be reconciled, it cannot be questioned that the origin of light, as of every other part of the universe, is thus restricted to the exertion of the divine will. The narrative in the original is so simple, yet at the same time so majestic and impressive, both in thought and in diction, as to fill the heart with lofty and pleasureable sentiment of awe and wonder. If this be the beauty that cloaks around the light of our moral world, what must be the corresponding mantle that robes the son of righteousness?

I. *His Divinity.*—The divinity of the son of righteousness is one of the greatest mysteries in the world. The mystery may be too great to be comprehended by human intellect or too deep to be fathomed by human skill, but the fact is not to be rejected and put aside on that account, for the world, by wisdom, know not God, and to reject his divinity because it is a mystery would be the height of absurdity. Nicodemus, although a doctor of law, could not understand the mystery of the new birth, nor have any of his successors comprehended it, but Christ, by simple comparison convinced him that it was a fact, which he subsequently admitted.

The scientific world is shocked every day with problems that they never can solve or understand, yet they admit them, and why would you reject the divinity of the Son of God because of mystery? He is divine because He is the immediate Son of God. He possesses the qualification necessary to make an atonement for the world and thus became a substitute for those he came to save. "He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquity and the chastisement of our peace is upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. On Him was laid the iniquities of us all. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Apart from His divinity He is not the Christ, for He would be only human, consequently could not, in the government of God, atone for another. This makes his divinity strictly necessary to assume the responsibility of a Saviour, in the restoration of man to the favor of God. Therefore he has the right here to assert of himself that he is the light of the world.

II. The sun of our moral world symbolizes the son of Righteousness: *First, by brightness* or his power to illuminate. The divine origin of light made the subject one of special interest to the Biblical nations. The sun was an object worshipped and intensely honored, especially for his clearness of brilliancy. When God created the sun he crowned him with the honor of being the central body of the solar system, around which the planets with their satalites have been moving with an undiminished

velocity. The sun is said to be a huge heated mass about 1,300,000 times the size of the earth, with a diameter of about 860,000 miles. At his absence the world is darkened; as he rises (so to speak) sending forth his light that moves through space with the rapidity of over 185,000 miles per second, darkness disappears and the whole earth becomes illuminated by his glory. Just so with Jesus Christ, the son of the ever-living God. His advent into the world was the bright and shining light to all the nations of the earth. For the angel that took the shepherds by great surprise as they watched their flocks by night, quickened a spirit of joy in their hearts by saying "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you this day is born in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." At this great day of brightness, brought forth in Christ, the spiritual light of the world, the selfish views held by the Jews that they were the only people of God's choice, was no longer to be tolerated. The poor that had been oppressed for want of acceptable sacrifice, now finds a new and living sacrifice and polytheism falls to the ground. The Jewish high priest is no longer needed to make atonement for the people. The sceptre is now about to depart from Judah. The law-giver is moving from between his feet, for Shiloah is come, and the people which sat in darkness see great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death light is springing up; and our Lord with boldness here makes himself

known when he says "I am the light of the world; he that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness."

Second, by Greatness.—The sun is the centre of attraction; all other lights of the universe are dependant upon him for their support. So is Christ the centre of attraction in the spiritual sphere. The nations of the earth own him as Lord, the angels of heaven gather around his throne and say, "Holy is the Lord God," heaven and earth are full of his glory. When we look on creation as the work of God's fingers, we find nothing (with the exception of man, who is in His image), that is so greatly represented by attractive beauty as the sun. Man honors him for his light. He has a tendency to beautify, strengthen and revive. When he is veiled by clouds, the whole earth is chilled, nature becomes deadened. So with Christ; he is the power that draws the sinner from darkness to light. His love enters the unregenerate heart, purifies and makes it meet for the kingdom. Without Christ the world would be in darkness. The man who knows not Christ is dead in sin.

Third, by Heat.—The sun of our moral world has a burning nature. Were it not for the atmosphere and moisture, our world in the torid zone would be divested of all living creatures. Every green herb would soon be scorched to lifelessness. So Christ has appointed a day when he will destroy his enemies by fire. When he shall have gathered his wheat he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable

fire. David said "that a fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies around about."—Psalm 98:3. His lightning enlighteneth the world; the earth saw and trembled, the hills melted like wax before the presence of the Lord. There will be none to escape his eye.

III. *This Light is Eternal and the Basis of all True Civilization.*—"I am Alpha and Omega—the first and the last"—sayeth the Christ. He is the light of heaven and earth, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He lights the pathway of every one that comes after him, for he says, "he that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness." Therefore, every one who knows Christ walks in this bright and shining light. Light is the chief desire of honest men.

Those who love darkness rather than light, their deeds are evil—darkness is an emblem of sorrow and light an emblem of pleasure. He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and this heavenly light falling on the souls of men is a living and life-giving force to human development, and is at variance with darkness. He is the true light because he is from eternity. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God," sayeth the apostle. He was with the church from Adam to Moses, and from Moses down to his noted advent into the world, coming onward as the rolling tide of truth and brightness. In this he was the light of the world, but it had not been manifested, hence darkness pre-

vailed. The Mosaic dispensation, though a decided advance on any that had gone before it, was but a shadow of what was revealed in the cradle of Bethlehem, when Christ was born.

Then and there began the administration of a glorious reign, in which all nations were to be blessed. Yes, his advent into the world was a new light bursting upon a long and dreary night of pain and sorrow. He came to claim his own and to take the kingdom to himself. A new light has arisen and new agencies and resources engaged to overthrow the empire of satan and rear on the ruins thereof the kingdom of our Emanuel. The conquerer had come. Out of his mouth went a two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength; or, he is portrayed as the bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. So bright was this light that the devil was greatly alarmed. His empire on earth had never before been so seriously imperilled. God had come in the flesh as the light to shine away all darkness. expressly to destroy the works of the devil and to take the armor in which he trusted, and to bind and cast him out to dwell in utter darkness forever. Hear the apostle crying: "the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. The coming of Christ meant war with the prince of darkness; therefore a desperate, a terrible resistance was at once offered, but the light was the conqueror. The devil being unable to stop the Saviour's advent into the world,

tried to resist his progress and baffle his purposes ; hence he tried with his sword of vengeance to slay him in the cradle and cut him off in early infancy, by using Herod as his agent, in giving utterance to the proclamation that all infants should be murdered, hoping thereby to kill Jesus. But the action only tended to diffuse the light in Egypt. Failing here to accomplish his design, he met the Lamb in the wilderness, but Christ, as the light, was too great to be extinguished ; hence he continues to shine as perfect day and here makes the public confession, "I am the Light of the World." Christ is the light of all lights ; He is the source of all true knowledge ; He is the chief attractive power by which man is drawn to God ; He is the mediator between the seen and the unseen, whereby the spiritual world is made real to mankind. Without Him the world would be in utter darkness. He is "the desire of all nations," the secret of man, the temple's honor, the world's Saviour and heaven's glory. He is honored by the Greek father, Clement of Alexander, as being not only the basis of Christianity, but Greek philosophy as well, for he says, "philosophy, like a school-master, has guided the Greeks also as the law did Israel to Christ. The greatest scholar of the Presbyterian church in America, the late Prof. B. Smith, has said of heathenism : "There glimmered through all its idolatries and sacrifices a strange, unearthly light, wandering in the fitful search for an incarnate Saviour. "He was in the world," says the apostle, "and the world was

made by him, and without him there was nothing made that was made." He did not come into the world as one who had just been thrown into existence, or as a stranger to inquire his way through life; divinely he was already here. His advent was of special manifestation as when a hidden fire burst forth, with a shining blaze. He was in the bosom of the Father from all eternity. Palestine was no strange country to him, for it was as a mansion built by his own hands. The hand that was nailed to the cross was the same that reared the mountains which lift their heads sublime. The hand through which the nails were driven was the hand that held from fallen man the sword of justice. It was no less strong than when it hung the moon and stars and gave movement to the world. The voice that talked with Pilot at the bar, was the same voice that called to Paul while on his way to Damascus. Paul says of him that "he was the Spiritual Rock that followed the Israelites. Moses said "thou, Jehovah, art seen face to face," the only begotten son who was in the bosom of the Father. He has declared him both on Mount Horeb and on the mount of transfiguration. Christ is the original light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.

Second, All inventions of the known world are only reflective sparks of this great light.—He who stood and spoke as one having authority, saying, "I am the light of the world" is the source of all true civilization. Exhibit anything that is true in science, whether it rolls from the astronomer or the labora-

tory of the skeptical chemist; discover anything that is lovely in character, whether it appears in the jungles of India or on the streets of Norfolk, or within the thoughtful seclusions of Berkley village, and Jesus Christ lays his holy hand upon it and says, "It is mine."

Christ is all and in all, and over all, and the fountain head of all true civilization. This light blazing forth from the redeeming glory of the cross, falling on the souls of men, is the only force of human development. Thus Christianity has been the leading power in the great progress of humanity from the creation of the world to the present time, and will be as long as a man's boundless intellect continues to spread and widen in the highest scales of improvement. For when the day comes that the faith which was first delivered to the saints is taken or darkened by disbelief, this world can no longer be a garden of pleasure and joy, but one of pain and gross darkness. This instruction is quite contrary to much of the popular theories of the day. Empty declaimers and grave philosophers inform us that religious convictions are nightmares of the past obstacles, and not incitements to human progress. Wicked voices are proclaiming that the day will soon come when the churches will be turned into school-houses and the Bible superseded by hand-books of science. The infidel lives in hopes of spreading his theories universally broadcast in the world with its noxious seed. "The Bible is no revelation of divine origin." The deist, with a trembling and wishful heart, looks for-

ward to the day when the word Christianity, or Christian religion, shall be blotted from the pages of history and erased from every mind. The Atheist prays that his wished for day will come when it shall be proclaimed on every housetop, on every hillside and in every valley, his Atheistical doctrine: "there is no God." All of these are only powers of darkness, howling to overthrow the kingdom of our God. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

"I am the light of the world," says Christ, and it is declared that he shall reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet; *i. e.*, this light shall shine until the darkness of every valley be dispersed and the kingdom of our Lord be built upon the ruins thereof. This is the light that John spoke of when he came forth from the wilderness of Judea, when he said, "to them that sat in darkness, light is sprung up." This is the basis of all civilization that has ever given impulse to a higher standard of morality. The holy book of the Hindoos preceded all East Indian culture, and the oldest monuments of Egypt, were built on the faith that man did not spring from dust alone. The poetry of Homer, whose blind eyes were ever turned toward Olympus, was the source of Hellenic culture and the cradle of Hellenic civilization. Whence came modern civilization? It knows no mother save Christianity. The European world is an edifice built by the hand of Christianity out of the fragments of the Roman empire. The deluge of Barbarism would have swept away the last

seed of refinement, and, I may say, humanity, but for Christianity, which held up the light of the world. I contribute the act of Emancipation to the wielding power that went forth from this light. Twenty-five years ago the thirteen Southern States declared an eternal separation from the Union, because their deeds were evil and their statute books deeply stained with the blood of the Negro. This blazing light began to send forth its translucent rays through every nook and corner of this dark continent, rising first in the hearts of the Northern church, then on its way to congress, where she bearded the lion in his den. The hallowed light mounted higher and higher and waxed warmer and warmer still, until the accumulating heat swelled into one formidable cloud, the thunder of whose voice shook the civilized world, bursting when she broke the slavery chains of four millions of human souls, and turned this hell of slavery into a shining field of freedom and Christianity. This light will continue to shine until it drives to the end of the world all darkness, of whatever nature or name. She will light up the benighted shores of heathendom.

We, dear Christians, are reflectors of this light. We are lights receiving our support from Christ, the great central light, as the moon is a reflective light of the sun, and we are commanded to 'let our light so shine that the world may see our good works and be constrained to glorify God.'

Finally, Christ is a light for Christians in the hour

of death.—Yes, at the dark brink of Jordan this blessed light shineth from above with an everlasting radiance that guides the pilgrim safely over; “though he walks through the valley of the shadow of death, he fears no evil.” It drives back the dark forbodings by the brightness of its coming. It opens up to the view of Zion’s traveler the dazzling throne of our God, so rich, so grand, so felicitous and soul-ennobling. So indescribably beautiful that the soul exclaims with one of old, “oh! death, where is thy sting, oh! grave, where is thy victory? Led on by this light the soul goes mounting triumphantly up the everlasting streets of paradise, singing and shouting praises unto the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, saying holy, holy, Lord God of Sabbath, the heavens and the earth are full of thy glory. AMEN.

And when we have been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun,
We have no less bright illustrious days,
Than when we first begun.

This sermon was delivered in a magnificent strain, creating quite an intense interest. The attention paid him during the discourse was marked and commendable. At some portions of the time one might have been able to hear the falling of a pin upon the floor. It was only at intervals that those who could not quench their emotions, would break the awful silence with amens, &c. They seemed moved and pierced to the heart, and sometimes appeared to be almost drawn from their seats. They were so carried off in the words of this sermon that

they really seemed to move and bend with his gesture. While the preachers' countenance was lit up with a heavenly glory, yet calm and self possessed, he went from paragraph to paragraph, and moulded sentence after sentence without hesitancy. This sermon was truly the top stone and crowning effort of the State Convention.





ERRATA.

Page 7, line 19, read "Ethridge" instead of "Eldridge."

Page 42, line 15, read "upper" instead of "uper."

Page 14, line 21, read "was surrounded" instead of "is surrounded."

Page 15, line 12, read "Charles Holly" instead of "Charles."

Page 59, line 6, read "E. M. Leigh" instead of "J. M. Leigh."

TO THE PUBLIC.

W. H. MAJOR & CO., whose headquarters are at the First Baptist Church, Harrison Street, have been appointed General Agents for the sale of this Book, and all arrangements for the purchase of the same must be made with them.

REV. C. B. W. GORDON.





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